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The Shape of Things

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THE LEGISLATIVE PICTURE HAS NEVER BEEN darker in Washington. The only legislation that seems to stand a chance in Congress these days is the emergency sort, such as relief appropriations and the big-navy stuff. As we go to press, there is very little probability of defeating the naval appropriation. But in the process of the debate, the progressive anti-armament bloc in Congress will have a chance to demonstrate its opposition and to warn the country not only of the rising military spirit but also of even more drastic legislation to come. The big struggle that is looming in the Senate is over the government-reorganization bill, on which we have commented several times. It is likely to hang like a shadow over the Senate for weeks, and the country will be treated to a repetition of the fight against the court plan. Already some of the Senators who figured prominently in that fight and a few others have been meeting as a strategy board; and they have enlisted in the opposition to the measure the same citizens' committees and patrioteering societies which succeeded in killing court reform. Watch for their propaganda. We are glad that the merchant-marine legislation, with its vicious labor provisions, has been stymied in the Senate committee; there are indications that the House bill will omit the labor sections. As for the wage-hour bill, it will take strong pressure from the C. I. O. and progressive legislators to get it through in any acceptable form. Washington is chiefly in the phase of "studying" various problems, including the railroad problem and that of commodity prices. The latter has real possibilities for inaugurating a policy of central planning for prices and production. But amid the present uncertainties, that would require decisive Presidential leadership. And on this issue at least such leadership is not in evidence.

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THE ANTI-LYNCHING BILL HAS AGAIN BEEN buried under an avalanche of sectional hatred and partisan Republican spite. It is clear that while it was the Southern bourbons who linked hands to form a filibustering Hindenburg line, it was the Northern Republicans who prevented a two-thirds' vote from being piled up to apply the cloture rule and break the filibuster. No one who had any hand in the entire shameful proceeding has any reason to feel proud of his role in keeping the South free for rope and faggot. There are a few words that are

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worth saying now over the grave of the anti-lynching bill. We come to praise it for the things which, in dying, it made clear to the country. The greatest result of the fight was the realization on the part of the Senate and of Washington newspapermen that the issue far transcended lynching itself or the larger question of race discrimination; that if a group of reactionaries can by this means succeed in killing an anti-lynching bill, they can also succeed in killing any other sort of progressive legislation. Secondly, it has become clear that the fight against the bill had an economic base. It was a fight on the part of reactionaries in the South not only to continue the right of terrorizing Negroes through lynching, but also to continue the right of terrorizing whites as well as Negroes and keep them from organizing for decent wages and for political and educational opportunities. It is important to note that the Wagner amendment to the relief appropriation, providing for collective bargaining on relief projects, was killed mainly by Southern opposition. Finally it has become clear that the Negro vote will have to be reckoned with increasingly as a factor in American life. The fight against the bill has done much to complete the process of bringing the Negroes to political consciousness. It has become clear to them who their enemies are, and clear also that their enemies are the enemies of civil liberties and economic progress. As for Senator Wagner, despite the defeat of his bill, he emerges from the fight with increased stature.

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MAY A PRESIDENT TURN AUTHOR WHILE still in office? And if he does, may he reap the financial rewards of authorship like anyone else, or should he treat his literary products as he treats his public statements and give them impartially to the entire press? These are the questions that are now agitating official, journalistic, and publishing circles. For Mr. Roosevelt has again shattered precedent. He has not only undertaken to publish his state papers this spring, in a five-volume edition to be put out by Random House, instead of waiting until the issues they raise and their writer as well are both safely dead; but he has also written notes and comments on those papers and has sold the pre-publication rights to the United Features syndicate; and he is planning two *Liberty* articles of a similar nature. This has raised a howl, notably from the New York *Herald Tribune* and from David Lawrence. The *Herald Tribune,* in an editorial headed Big Business in the White House, speaks of it as "cashing in on a huge scale on the job" of the Presidency, and as "a steep descent for a President of the United States." Mr. Lawrence, more ironic, sees in it proof "that the profit motive is rising in Mr. Roosevelt's psychology," and wonders why by the same logic he should not give paid testimonials for "what cigarettes he smokes or what suspenders he wears." We find it hard to grow either indignant or ironic about the matter. It is a fine thing for a President to take the time and trouble to prepare his state papers for posterity and to annotate them while he is still of vigorous mind and has around him the resources for doing a competent job. The treatment Mr. Roosevelt has thus far received from the press as a whole has scarcely been such as to warrant the belief that it would give his New Deal comments a square deal. It is a safe guess that in selling them to a syndicate he felt that he could get for them the continuous attention they warrant. He may have been wrong in his reasoning, and there may be enough people who feel that he has impaired the dignity of his office to make the strategy backfire. But we doubt very strongly that mercenary motives were involved. To dispel all controversy on that score, the President would do well to make it clear that he is devoting his earnings to charity.

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LOCAL CONTESTS IN WHICH LABOR AS A political force is directly involved are for the moment gaining the center of the national stage. There is a feeling that they may serve as a forecast of 1940 as well as 1938. The anti-labor press has been getting a good deal of comfort out of the results of the Seattle municipal primary. Although Mayor Dore, the candidate of Dave Beck and reactionary labor, ran behind Vic Meyers, the C. I. O. candidate, their combined vote was less than that of Arthur Langlie, who ran as an "honest-government" business man's candidate. The results prove something, but not that labor is on the wane as a political force. They prove rather that in Seattle, as in Detroit last year, labor is handicapped politically by the C. I. O.–A. F. of L. split. Langlie appealed to the lower middle class, which was tired of the Beck-Bridges labor fight. And the business groups will continue to capitalize on that fatigue, which may prove decisive nationally as well as locally. The same applies to the Pennsylvania situation, where the anti-labor Democrats have put through a state ticket without giving Lieutenant Governor Tom Kennedy of the United Mine Workers a major place. Their argument is that the A. F. of L. will turn against the Democrats if a C. I. O. man runs for governor or senator. William Green, with his characteristic blindness, has served notice to that effect, thereby putting himself on record as placing his factional fight ahead of the interests of labor as a whole. There can be little doubt that if labor could settle its difficulties, both in Seattle and Pennsylvania, not only would the labor vote be pooled but middle-class votes could also be won, as they were in the last New York City election.

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THE KILLING OF A POORMASTER IN HOBOKEN by a relief client is a dramatic flare that lights up a scene of sordid misery in one corner of Frank Hague's empire. Another was the death by starvation of a three-year-old boy last May. Hoboken, once prosperous, is poverty-stricken. It has 60,000 inhabitants, yet it spent only $3,000 on relief last year. It was the boast of Harry L. Barck, the poormaster for forty-two years and a faithful Hague man, that he had cut the Hoboken relief rolls from 7,000 to 360, and his brutality in handling the poor over whom he wielded such final power was notorious. In addition, Joseph Scutellaro, who killed him,

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was not in political favor because, simply, his father, who had formerly been a thriving contractor, had backed a non-Hague Democrat in 1931. His business has since been reduced to nothing. The fact that Governor Moore, immediately after the incident, instructed that $1,500,000 be withdrawn from general state funds and issued to municipalities for relief purposes indicates that the officials, even of New Jersey, realize that Scutellaro's act was not simple homicide but a fanatical gesture against misery long drawn out.

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THE JAPANESE DIET'S FIGHT AGAINST THE war-mobilization bill is not so much indicative of a resurgence of democracy as of ire at the bad faith of the military. For years Japan has been ruled under a compromise arrangement whereby the army dominated foreign policy and military expenditures, while financial and civilian interests had a free hand in domestic policy. The present bill would give the army complete control over all business and financial affairs, a power which it has been seeking since 1931. Once control passes into the hands of the military, it will presumably remain there irrespective of the outcome of the hostilities in China. In arguing for the passage of the bill the government has unwittingly revealed the growing seriousness of the country's economic plight. Already the shortage of raw materials for the war industries is being felt. Proposals have been advanced to mix artificial fiber with wool in the manufacture of uniforms, and otherwise make use of substitute materials. Coordination of the country's economic life under army dictatorship may bring a more efficient use of materials, but it cannot furnish the needed war supplies as long as other countries refuse to buy Japanese goods. The difficulties which Japan is facing today are insignificant compared to those which it is likely to face six months from now.

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NEWS OF INDIA IS USUALLY CONCEALED between two divorce notices in your family newspaper. To those who read John Gunther's full report on India's changing political pattern in *The Nation* two weeks ago the recent crisis will seem less startling and more intelligible. Two of the seven provincial cabinets which the Indian National Congress won in the elections last year have resigned. They did so after the British governors vetoed a move to release political prisoners in those areas. Although only forty-one prisoners were actually involved, the incident has crystallized those crucial divisions within the Congress which Mr. Gunther detailed. When the Congress, after bitter internal controversy, yielded to the plea of the "moderates" for participation in the government, the radical wing asserted its skepticism of the result. It predicted arbitrary exercise of the "safeguard" power retained by Britain, allegedly for use in "emergencies" only. Now at least a measure of this skepticism has been vindicated. The veto action has brought renewed demands for open resistance to British domination, and a pronounced shift in the strategy of the Congress may take place. That the British have precipitated this crisis now, when they have their hands full on every front, is perhaps its most significant aspect. Presumably they can ill afford another period of colonial conflict. But neither can they ignore the implications which might flow from a successful trial of authentic home rule in India.

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IF MRS. PAULINE MAE CLARKE OF TORONTO does not win a share in the baby derby, with its prize of $500,000, it will not be through lack of single-hearted devotion to the task she set herself. She cleared the decks for action by putting her earlier offspring in foster homes and separating from her husband. She then had five children by another man with whom she made an agreement, not a gentleman's agreement but a written one, to give him a percentage of her winnings in the derby. It is not explained why she changed fathers, but the judge who is faced with the problem of passing on the legitimacy and eligibility of the five entries is "very much troubled." "I think," he said, "she deliberately turned her back on her first children." And not only on her children. We ourselves are torn between wonder at the enterprise of Mrs. Clarke and her threat to middle-class virtues. The man, now dead, who posted the prize was undoubtedly a family man who would turn in his grave at the spectacle his magnanimity has brought to pass. If she fails to place, it will be the greatest recent example of love's labor lost.

Europe and America

European Balance Sheet

WHAT has happened in Europe in the past few weeks may be viewed on three planes: first, it has again changed the diplomatic map of Europe — that nightmare construction, crisscrossed with alliances, threats, commitments — and thereby blasted some lingering democratic hopes; second, it definitely marks the end of the post-war system, which has involved at least the rhetorical dominance and support of the League by England; third, it shows more clearly than ever at what points the lines of power converge and in whose hands lie the determinations of the world's destiny.

The quick succession of events has been, to most people in America who care about democratic survival, like a sequence of communiqués from the world's battlefields —all carrying bad news. They have cast a pall over our press. For whatever may be the longer view, Hitler has, in immediate terms, survived a crisis, struck a number of swift, successful blows in pursuit of his final aims, and emerged more than ever as the man in whose ominous shadow European policy is being hammered out. The army purge, the Austrian coup, the Reichstag speech, the Nazi riots in Vienna, the British Cabinet decisions, the impending Anglo-Italian talks, the confusion in Paris, the fear that hangs over Czechoslovakia—there is no

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anodyne that will blot out the impact of these facts on the world's consciousness.

Realism dictates that we measure future events after the pattern of what has actually happened. But realism dictates also that we interpret that pattern not through Hitler's own rhetoric but through a sober appraisal of the effective forces in Europe, and also the potential forces which recent events may rouse to activity. For it is the way of dictators to dramatize their personal careers and national adventures. Hitler's Opera House speech, eight days after Schuschnigg's surrender at Berchtesgaden was in a sense an overplaying of the Nazi hand. In his three-hour word torrent Hitler presented the world with the material for the severest possible indictment of Nazi aims and methods. There had been those—even the well-informed editors of the *New Statesman* in London—who had confidently expected that Hitler would follow brutal deeds with soft words. Instead of that, he flayed England, threatened France if it sought to aid its Central European allies, expressed undying enmity to Russia, insulted Eden, recognized Manchoukuo, expressed hopes for a Japanese victory, renewed the anti-Comintern pact, condemned the League as "fantastic," offered no guaranties of Austrian independence, and laid claim to German national minorities everywhere in the world. He could not possibly have made a speech better calculated to throw confusion into the pro-Nazi circles in England and France or give comfort to Mr. Chamberlain's opponents.

A second event that was not an undiluted help to Germany was Eden's resignation. True, it weakens the collective-security forces in the British government. But Eden has always been isolated and for that reason ineffective in the Cabinet. His resignation has at least drawn aside the only remaining veil from Chamberlain's strategy. It has removed Britain's pretensions to be a supporter of the League of Nations, and has given a new rallying cry to British labor.

A third element in the situation that has implications in both directions is the role of Italy. It is safe to accept as an initial premise the fact that Mussolini is no fool. He has never had any hankering to see Germany facing him at the Brenner Pass. Yet that is what German annexation of Austria would mean. The only explanation of his apparent acquiescence is Italy's weakness. There are reports that Schuschnigg received his command-invitation to come to Berchtesgaden without the knowledge of either Mussolini or Ciano. But in any event, the Duce could have offered no effective opposition. Mussolini has been weakened by his costly adventures in Ethiopia and Spain, and by the armament program that he has sought to impose on an economic base unable to support it. Hence his flirtation with Chamberlain and the coming Anglo-Italian agreement, which, while in no sense extenuating the folly of Chamberlain's policy (what reason can England have to take Mussolini at his word?) nevertheless give reason for concluding that the Rome-Berlin axis is much shakier than the Nazis would have the world believe. On the other hand, Italy's weakness makes the German alliance necessary to Mussolini for whatever schemes of aggression he may have in mind at the expense of Franco-British interests. In any event, it is one of the important and incalculable elements in Europe's future.

The Austrian situation has moved with less rapidity than was at first expected. When Hitler pushed his Trojan horse into Vienna, in the form of Nazi control of the police power, it looked as if the other steps in the achievement of a completely Nazified Austria would follow at the staccato pace to which the world has by now become accustomed. That this has not happened is due to the firmness Chancellor Schuschnigg has shown and the support he has been accorded. That support has come from the Fatherland Front, from clerical elements, even from the Austrian workers; its extent may be judged from the fact that before Schuschnigg made his speech to the Federal Council he was handed a petition signed by a million Austrians asking him to stand firm for Austria's independence. His speech was, under the circumstances, a gallant one. The fact that it was received with such surprise in Berlin and that it so clearly announced the guaranty of Austrian independence that Hitler had failed to mention in his own speech would seem to indicate that German power in Austria will not be achieved through Schuschnigg. Thus far the Chancellor has used a strong hand, especially in sending troops and planes to Graz in Styria, as a result of which a huge scheduled Nazi demonstration was called off. And there are indications, notably the fact that Cardinal Innitzer, under orders from the Vatican, has asked for prayers and special masses throughout Austria for a "free Austria," that Mussolini may be working quietly against Hitler in Vienna.

Nevertheless, Schuschnigg's position is immensely difficult. The probabilities are that Hitler will in the end have his victory in Austria, just as he had it in Danzig. If that happens, Schuschnigg will have his own past deeds and those of Dollfuss to thank for it. For, as G. E. R. Gedye has pointed out in his brilliant dispatches from Vienna to the New York *Times,* Austria was doomed when Dollfuss turned his artillery against 32 per cent of his countrymen—the Social Democrats—and then sought to fight the 25 per cent of Nazis with the diffused residue of the population. Schuschnigg has continued the policy of trying to resist a powerful dictatorship with an inadequate one. The Austrian workers have bitter memories of the past, and are suspicious of Schuschnigg now. To add to his troubles, the Nazi organizations are on the point of changing their name and thereby legalizing their demonstrations. Eventually a bloody clash seems inevitable. The most that can be hoped is that when it comes the Austrian workers will be prepared for it and will have learned from the Spanish experience how to organize an effective resistance against a fascist coup from within and without. Hitler may win in Vienna, but his victory will be dearly bought.

What follows for the Nazis after the Austrian adventure is fairly clear. Their eye is on Czechoslovakia. Once in control of Austria they can use the same tactics

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in Prague that they are using now in Vienna. Against that eventuality the overwhelming vote of the French Chamber of Deputies to uphold the Delbos foreign policy, and Delbos's reaffirmation of the Soviet pact and his announcement that France will fight to protect Czechoslovakia come as an important reassurance. How long France will pursue so firm a policy it is impossible to guess. The shift in England left France holding a bag full of high explosives. In the past two years it has made repeated concessions to retain Britain's friendship, concessions which have virtually destroyed its independent influence in Europe. It has stood idly by while a friendly republican government in Spain has fought for its life against Italian-German intervention. A fortnight ago it agreed to the sacrifice of Austria on the altar of Chamberlain's policy. As a reward for its loyalty, France now finds itself more isolated than at any time in recent history. The Chautemps ministry has met its crisis in foreign policy with apparent courage. It faces a domestic crisis in the new labor code. Whether Chautemps can extract concessions from labor depends upon the willingness of the organized workers to trust his firmness in dealing with Hitler. If there ever was a time when a clear and militant policy was needed among the left elements in the Popular Front, it is now. Unfortunately the recent indications that the Soviet Union has given up hope of collective action and the announcement of the new conspiracy trials in Russia come tragically to diminish the chances of the labor groups in France and England uniting behind a program of collective security. It would seem, quite apart from the reasons for the trials themselves, as if the Russians had a genius for selecting for their own internal crises the exact moments when they were most likely to weaken the labor movements of the world and to forfeit the confidence of their allies among the nations.

Cutting across and beneath these diplomatic maneuvers and internal national considerations are three sets of factors that are likely in the long run to determine the future of Western cultures. One is the ever-present factor of economic power. The fascist nations have had numerous diplomatic victories; they have been relatively weak in their military adventures, despite the huge war machines they are building. But what of their economic power? The stability of whatever structures of political power they erect will depend on their economic resources and how they use them. Here Hitler, like Mussolini and Japan, is weak. If the industrial democracies made this fact the key to their policy, and were willing to pool their own economic strength to maintain the peace of the world, they would discover a new principle of international order. The second question is where the working-class movements of the various countries will stand in the coming crises. In England, in France, in Austria nothing decisive can be done to reverse the present reactionary trends unless it is backed by unified workers' movements. The third factor is the maintenance of morale among the democracies. Mr. Chamberlain may be a cleverer man than Mr. Eden, but his "realism," which implies capitulation to the entire scheme of international values of the fascist powers, is the most unrealistic sort of realism. For while economic strength will furnish the sinews of war, we have learned in the recent Spanish experience that morale is of enormous importance. The democracies may well take their cue from Thomas Mann, who in his American lecture tour is asserting that it is the democratic idea that is youthful, and fascism that represents the decadence of the world.

Britain's Last Chance

The days that have passed since Anthony Eden's resignation have permitted the world to grasp something of the manifold significance of the revolution which has occurred in Great Britain's traditional foreign policy. With Chamberlain's repudiation of the League an era has ended. Despite all compromises, all previous surrenders, the assumption that Britain recognized its obligations under the Covenant has been the basis of the foreign policies of France, the Little Entente, Poland, and, to a lesser extent, the United States as well.

Viewed in perspective, Chamberlain's policy would seem to be equally disastrous to fundamental British interests. It is frequently said that the British Commonwealth of Nations is held together by the same type of moral pressure which has maintained the League, and that the disintegration of the latter would perforce mean the collapse of the empire. While this seems to overlook the very important financial ties between the dominions and the mother country, it nevertheless is true that the growth of power politics and the development of the concepts of regionalism and autarchy associated with fascism would spell the doom of a voluntary commonwealth like the British Empire. Moreover, important links in the empire, such as Ireland, South Africa, and Australia, have remained loyal at least partially because of their faith in Britain as the dominating force behind the League. Public opinion in all the dominions, including Canada, appears to have aligned itself definitely on the side of Eden.

In fact, feeling in England itself seems to be running strongly against the government. That the Labor and Liberal parties would oppose Chamberlain was to be expected. Both parties have traditionally based their foreign policy on the principle of collective security. But there are also signs of revolt within the Conservative ranks. A number of "up-country" Conservative dailies have come out in support of Eden. In addition to Eden's opposition, which is far more important to the electorate than to Parliament, there is the opposition of the Churchill faction, which may prove serious in Parliament. And for the first time in years the opposition parties have an issue of unlimited possibilities. Knuckling under to the threats of a foreign dictator is no better politics in England than in any other country, particularly when it involves the surrender of vast interests. Moreover, they have a powerful weapon in Chamberlain's direct admission that the government has abandoned the policies upon which it was elected in 1935. No British government has ever dared undertake such a fundamental shift of policy without a

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popular mandate. To be sure, Eden has announced that he will not appeal to the country against Chamberlain and thus split the Conservatives. But he could have said little else, given the demands of party discipline. The fact remains that his resignation has finally awakened the British Labor Party from its long sleep and served to crystallize latent opposition.

To the question as to why the Chamberlain government is willing to risk its political future rather than stand by the principles of collective security to which it is committed, there is only one convincing answer: collective action implies not only the checking of fascist aggression but the strengthening of the left governments in Spain, France, and the Soviet Union. Since this would presumably lead to the ultimate overthrow of Mussolini and possibly of Hitler, the British tories have become convinced that they are faced with a choice between "communism" and "fascism." Faulty though their perspective may be, there can be no doubt that they have made their choice. The only remaining question is whether the British people as a whole are willing to ratify a decision resulting from the hysteria of a few.

America Must Act

The United States, no less than other countries, must now carefully reappraise its foreign policy in the light of the events of the past fortnight. The isolationists are jubilant, pointing to the débâcle in Great Britain as final proof of the validity of their position. Strangely enough, they denounce Chamberlain for adopting a policy which, in essentials, is the same as their own. For the isolationists have openly advocated concessions to the aggressors as a means of lessening existing world tensions. Like Chamberlain, they have ignored the possible effect of their policy on the smaller democratic countries; and while paying lip service to the principles of international cooperation, they have consistently sabotaged all efforts in that direction.

But if the isolationists are in an impossible logical position, the advocates of collective security have also been put on the defensive. In recent months emphasis has been placed on "parallel action" with the other democratic powers to restrain aggression. With Great Britain embracing the aggressors, people are asking whom the United States can cooperate with and to what end. Die-hard League of Nations supporters are in a particularly difficult situation if they insist, as many do, that cooperation must be through the machinery of the League.

Isolationism, however, is not rendered less dangerous by the practical difficulties standing in the way of collective action. Any step which contributes to international anarchy is a step toward war. Conversely, if war is ever to be eliminated, it will be through the creation of a system of cooperation. There is every evidence that an overwhelming majority of the peoples of the Western world desire such a system and will support it. A recent Gallup poll showed that, despite Chamberlain's policies, 69 per cent of the British public actively favor a policy of collective security. The setbacks suffered by the League are not due to weakness in its basic concept but to the opposition of vested interests to the application of sanctions. The League has also been hampered by the fact that few statesmen have really understood or had faith in collective security. They have paid tribute to the collective ideal, but their policies have been consistently nationalistic, especially in a crisis. That was to be expected. Men's minds do not change overnight. But what was not to be expected was that Great Britain would follow a line not in accord with its fundamental interests.

The breakdown of formal cooperation between the democratic governments before the fascist bluff increases the importance of informal cooperation by means of the people's boycott. Representatives of organizations numbering 123 million persons from 43 different countries attended the World Boycott Conference held in London a fortnight ago. Recent reports in the New York *Times* indicate that Japanese sales in the United States have fallen off 60 to 70 per cent since the war in China began. The January trade figures, just released, show that American purchases of raw silk were off 50 per cent from the corresponding period of the previous year for the second consecutive month. Success of the boycott against Japan, now within the reach of possibility, would do much to restore the world's faith in cooperative action.

Meanwhile, we should not let up in our pressure for governmental action. We have no reason for despair merely because Hitler has won another victory. Fascism is still essentially weak. The people of Spain and Austria have not given up the fight; both Czechoslovakia and France have reaffirmed their faith in the collective method; there are encouraging signs of a popular revolt in England. If the United States would respond by taking the leadership in cooperative action in the Far East, this development would transcend in importance the shift in British policy and would be the surest way of bringing its reversal. And even without Britain, there are still France, the Soviet Union, most of the minor countries, and a large section of the British Empire which would rally to American leadership.

The most crushing immediate reply which the United States could give Hitler at this moment would be a revision of the Neutrality Act making it inapplicable to civil strife and establishing a clear distinction between aggressors and their victims. The experience of the past year has demonstrated the basic injustice of the act as it now stands. If it cannot be revised so as to permit this country to cooperate in moves to aid the aggrieved and curb assistance to aggressors, it should be repealed. Joint economic action against aggression may be impracticable at the moment, but the United States should at least be in a position where it can withhold aid to aggressors in case the atmosphere changes in Europe. The Administration's lack of such power was one of the major causes of the fiasco of oil sanctions in 1935.

Revision of the Neutrality Act would have the immediate effect of permitting sales to the Spanish government, it would remove the danger of our being forced to help Japan at the expense of China, and it would be rightly interpreted as a warning that we are not wholly unconcerned with the march of aggression.

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Profiteers Move Up

BY PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, February 28

IN OTHER days it was the quaint custom of American shipbuilders and armor-plate manufacturers to support a lobbyist in the person of Bill Shearer, self-styled "Big Bass Drum," whose duties included whooping it up for more and bigger cruisers, sabotaging disarmament conferences, "educating" and "irrigating" the more ignorant and arid Washington correspondents, and performing similar chores of a patriotic and lucrative nature. Nowadays Bill's singular talents go begging, and no wonder. Within a week Adolf Hitler and Neville Chamberlain did more to brighten the future for the American armament industry than the "Big Bass Drum" accomplished in years of faithful service.

Joseph P. Kennedy

Although the situation is somewhat confused, there is no doubt that recent events in Europe have been a boon to Washington's war-scare mongers. Opposition to the navy expansion program—always a thankless task—has been made infinitely more difficult and discouraging. Critics of the program, such as Senator Borah and Representative Maverick, instinctively coupled their objections with distrust of British motives and policy. Now their worst suspicions concerning Britain have been confirmed, but the net result is to strengthen the hand of the big-navy clique. Congressional reaction is that we can't trust anyone and hence had better look to our defenses.

More and more the drive for a gigantic navy and "an adequate merchant marine" points toward a saturnalia of profiteering at government expense unequaled since the World War. This fact even penetrated the breezy assurance of Joe Kennedy on the eve of his departure for London. But not until he had ordered his knee breeches and bought his ticket did it dawn on him that while he was dispatching crisp orders to place striking American seamen in irons, the "big six" among American shipbuilders had been outfitting for an adventure which would make any of Captain Kidd's look like sheer philanthropy. Invited to bid on the construction of twelve cargo ships to be partially subsidized by the Maritime Commission, four firms submitted figures which were approximately twice the costs estimated by the commission's experts and about three times the cost of building the same vessels in England. Two members of the "big six" failed to submit bids, although they were understood to have prepared estimates. Moreover, the bids submitted were in such form as to cause Kennedy to declare that "if they were not collusive, the result was the same as if they had been." I quote from testimony before the Senate Commerce Committee:

SENATOR VANDENBERG: Are we not likely to run into precisely this situation when this new navy is built?

KENNEDY: I should think it would be much worse.

SENATOR VANDENBERG: So these estimates for $800,000,000 for battleships don't mean a thing if this sort of bidding is to persist?

KENNEDY: Quite.

SENATOR BERRY: What is the increase in labor costs?

KENNEDY: . . . I cannot find that labor is getting any particular amount of this money. Nor are materials high enough to justify any such prices.

SENATOR CLARK: I have run across evidence of this combine in other matters. In the present situation you can buy from them or not at all. Isn't it more or less of a sitdown strike?

KENNEDY: That is the result. I do not know whether that is the premise, but that is the conclusion.

To understand how well-taken was Vandenberg's point, let it be remembered that the costs of new naval construction as submitted to the House Committee on Naval Affairs are simply the estimates of navy experts using the same methods of computation that were used by the commission experts. Indeed, some of the same experts probably worked on both sets of estimates. That simply means that a two-billion-dollar addition to the navy, as contemplated by the navy, would cost about four billion if constructed by the only builders in this country who are equipped with the necessary facilities.

By what ingenious method did the daring and resourceful Kennedy propose to circumvent this contemplated holdup? First, by subsidizing "independent" builders and using their competition as a club over the "big six"; second, by having the ships built in England; and third, *"but only as a last alternative,"* by letting the government build them! But why "only as a last alternative"? To answer that it would be necesary to explain the social philosophy of Banker Kennedy—provided he did not sufficiently explain it himself when he ordered the striking seamen put in irons unless they called off the strike.

By the time this appears the La Follette committee will have resumed its vital investigation of the violation of civil liberties in labor disputes, and on its schedule is a subject of compelling importance. Among the sinister practices devised and applied in crushing the strike in "Little Steel" last year, one of the most viciously effective was that of inspiring and financing vigilante movements.

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Such movements appeared in several states, notably Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan. Usually they took the form of "citizens' committees" whose strike-breaking tactics included organizing "back to work" movements, coercing or corrupting local newspapers in the rare instances where that was necessary, and even organizing mobs to assault the strikers. The application of this technique was set forth in elaborate detail in the notorious Mohawk Valley formula, of which it is an integral part. In essence it is a Ku Klux process with heavy overtones of the local chamber of commerce and local banks.

Pehaps the most notorious example of its use occurred in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, during the strike at the Cambria plant of Bethlehem Steel. It has been testified at hearings before a National Labor Board examiner that a company executive supplied the Citizens' Committee with $30,000 in cash, which was turned over to Mayor Daniel J. Shields for the hire of special policemen and the purchase of tear-gas equipment and other restoratives of industrial peace. Similar committees operated in Ohio towns dominated by Girdler's Republic Steel, but less is known about how they were formed and financed, although the effect of their activities duplicated that in Johnstown. Senators La Follette and Thomas (of Utah) may be expected to conduct a thorough exploration of these activities, and a more-needed job is hard to imagine. If there is a real danger of fascism in the United States—and I certainly believe there is—here is where it lies. It should not be forgotten that Hitler got his original financing from the steel barons of the Ruhr, just as his prototype, Mussolini, was launched on the March to Rome by the industrialists of Milan. No specter of a man on a white horse disturbs my dreams, but I have not forgotten the bloody ax handles, or the seven men who died last Memorial Day with bullet holes in their backs because they made the mistake of believing their government was strong enough to enforce the Wagner Act against the steel barons who defied it.

Justice Black, Dissenting

BY MAX LERNER

"THE man who wrote that opinion," I heard a legal friend say of one of Justice Black's dissents, "is a damn good lawyer." And he smiled broadly and knowingly. I did not smile back at the innuendo that Justice Black did not write his own opinions. The remark summed up the peculiar dualism of attitude of the anti-Black people now that he is writing his name large in the court's annals. They cannot help admiring the courage and ability shown in his decisions; yet the censor that watches over our self-esteem will not permit them to confess that they were wrong about him in the first place. The result is the conclusion that since the opinions are good ones, it must have been a couple of other fellows who wrote them.

Whoever wrote them, they have set the legal world on its ear. There were many among Justice Black's friends who wanted him to go slow when he came on the court, wanted him to establish his position before he began applying his drastic progressivism to the judicial process. This applies to several of Black's friends on the court itself, who received him with a mixture of welcome and trepidation. They regarded him much as a Social Registerite might regard a protracted visit by a relative fresh from the sticks, talented and high-spirited, but uncouth, unpredictable, and a questionable addition to formal parties. They wished he would give himself a chance to mellow. Several are reported to have said that given five or ten years in which to master the lore of the court and steep himself in its traditions and spirit, Black would make a great justice.

But Black didn't intend to wait that long. Outwardly he proved malleable enough. His relations with his colleagues have been personally cordial. Even the Chief Justice went out of his way to be friendly. Only Justice McReynolds is still hostile; he regards Black as a renegade Southerner. And well he may, for their two social philosophies are as widely removed as the antipodes. Responding to the friendliness of the other judges, Black has been almost hypersensitive to the court tradition about personal discreetness. He surrounds even his casual contacts with elaborate safeguards. He is still suffering from the trauma of having people forever on his trail during the agonizing weeks of his *cause célèbre*.

But while eager to play the game in all personal matters, Justice Black has challenged the rules of the game so far as constitutional law is concerned.

Of twenty opinions in which Justice Black's name appears, six have been dissents and six have been concurring opinions in which he disagreed with the court's reasoning but agreed with the conclusion. In eight he wrote the court opinion. This is a high ratio of divergence, especially for a new justice. I shall pass over the cases in which Black has written the court's majority or unanimous decision, because the cases assigned to him have been relatively unimportant. It is as a dissenter that he has most sharply broken the court's patterns of thought and most distressed even his liberal colleagues.

The case involving the "obligations of contracts" clause (*Indiana ex rel. Anderson* vs. *Brand*) does not at first sight reveal the importance that it possesses. The Indiana legislature in 1927 passed an act establishing a certain tenure for teachers, and then in 1933 it passed another act excluding township schools from the tenure provi-

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sions. A teacher in a township school who had lost her job sued on the ground that the 1927 act established a contract whereby she could not be discharged except under certain conditions, and that the 1933 act had impaired the obligation of the contract and was invalid. The Supreme Court, reversing the state court, held with her, but Black dissented. A comparison of his opinion with the majority opinion by Justice Roberts shows disagreements as to the construction both of the state legislation and of Indiana precedents. But basically the disagreement was over the extent of state sovereignty as against the overriding sanctity of contracts. And there, for Black, is the nub of the matter. He believes in legislative supremacy, state or federal, as against judicial supremacy and the rigid hold of contract doctrine. Intellectually he knows where he stands in the struggle, begun in America over a century ago with *Fletcher* vs. *Peck* and the Dartmouth College case, between those who would freeze our order through property institutions and those who would keep it fluid through legislative change.

But the struggle over the contract clause is more an echo of past battles than an expression of present conflicts. More central in Black's judicial career are his opinions in the utility cases. Two of them stand out—a dissent in *McCart* vs. *Indianapolis Water Company* and a concurring opinion in *United Gas Public Service Company* vs. *Texas*. The Indianapolis Water dissent created a flurry in legal circles on procedural grounds. For Black did the unprecedented thing of dissenting from a *per curiam* decision, in which the court speaks as a whole rather than through any particular justice. With a sharp, clipped severity the court held that the lower court, in upholding the state commission's schedule of water rates, had erred in not allowing for an upward trend of prices between 1933 and 1935. The rates had been held not confiscatory in 1933; but—the *per curiam* opinion argued —they might have become confiscatory by the time the 1935 decision was handed down. Black's answer to this decision forms the best opinion he has thus far written. It is full, detailed, statistical in the best Brandeis manner; it is powerful in its irony at the fantastic delays of due-process procedure; it cuts through the overgrowths of legal jargon which screen the fact that ultimately it is the consumer who pays for the impotence of the regulatory system and for the luxury of shuttling cases back and forth between courts. It had taken six years for the commission's order to reach the court; it was now being remanded; at the same rate, it should be back in the court again in 1943. Black preferred to settle it then and there. And he does so on the basis of the prudent-investment principle which Justice Brandeis had developed in his classic dissents. In the process he writes a severe condemnation of the whole practice of the court, since 1890, of invalidating state regulation of utility rates.

The Texas gas case was the second round of the utility fight between Black and the court. Here again he pulled no punches. In a separate concurring opinion he pointed out that the company is an affiliate of the Electric Bond and Share, that the salaries paid to the holding-company officials are set down to operating expenses for the subsidiary and are paid by the consumer in the form of inflated rates. This opinion is notable also for its defense of the jury trial as a method of fixing the validity of commission rate-setting (Justice McReynolds, in one of his *ex tempore* speeches from the bench, called it "little more than a farce").

But the dissent which has proved most breath-taking is the one on the corporation as a person (*Connecticut General Life Insurance Company* vs. *Johnson*). I do not myself regard it as ranking in importance with the utility opinions: it has not the same chance of being fruitful for the future. But there can be no doubt of its dramatic character. The California legislature laid a tax on insurance premiums. The court overruled it as violative of the Fourteenth Amendment, which provides that "no state shall . . . deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person . . . the equal protection of the laws." Black says quite simply, "I do not believe that the word 'person' in the Fourteenth Amendment includes corporations." And thus he sweeps away fifty years of Supreme Court history and strikes at one of the props of corporate power.

But he does so only after an interesting survey of the legislative and judicial history of the amendment. I believe he is on solid ground so far as history is concerned. There has been for some time a controversy among American historians as to whether those who framed the amendment intended it as a protection of corporate property rights. That such was their intent was the argument of Roscoe Conkling, one of the members of the Congressional committee which drafted the amendment in 1866, when he appeared before the court in the San Mateo case in 1882. This would imply something of a plot or conspiracy on the part of the committee, for the purpose of the amendment was clearly the protection of the newly granted rights of Negroes against hostile state legislatures. Conkling's thesis was accepted as court doctrine in 1886 in the Santa Clara case. Black challenges it as irrelevant. Whatever individual members of the committee may have thought or intended, he points to the undoubted fact that the Congress that passed the amendment, the states that ratified it, and the people in whom the amending power rests were told that the amendment was to protect Negroes and not to remove corporations from the regulation of state governments.

Black's argument is good. There are, however, three things that trouble me about it. One is that in the face of fifty years of court history it is never likely to be more than a courageous gesture. Nor is it merely the time that has elapsed; it is the fact that the personality of the corporation has become an integral part of our constitutional law—right or wrong. The second is that his opinion would have been more complete if he had taken account of the fact that where "person" has been used previously in the language of the law and of lawyers, it has also been construed to include the corporation. The third is that the more strategic line of attack on the abuse of power by the courts would have been to insist that "due process" should be interpreted only to mean procedural safeguards and not substantive determinations

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of social policy. That was the direction of the Holmes approach, and an economic realist like Black could carry it out even more completely.

There remains the question of Black's impact on the future. He is not the sort of person who, like Holmes or Brandeis, can build a liberal minority around himself. His liberal colleagues are not ready to go with him; he is too acid, too impetuous, too downright; he ruffles judicial sensibilities. Like the child in the story he cries out that the king is after all naked, and it has been the whole function of constitutional law to weave imaginary garments for the nakedness of corporate power. Added to that, there is the fact that while his decisions are clear and well written they do not have the brilliance of phrase and the sure legal touch that Holmes had, or the scrupulous solidity and genius for procedure that Brandeis has. And they are, here and there, marred by somewhat careless footnotes and handling of precedents.

All of which means that Black has become a judicial crusader before he has come to maturity as a judge. His strength lies in the things in which he was strong as Senator—his feel for economic realities, his intrepid belief in popular democratic government as against any sort of oligarchy. He seems to belong in the Jacksonian period of the court, when the democratic upsurge brought to the bench tribunes of the people who had fought for them in the legislatures. Black has proved himself, in the deepest sense, a tribune of the people—ever watchful of their interests, zealous in protecting legislative power, reducing utility cases to the final problem of the interests of the consumer, zealous for government regulatory power over corporations. What remains is to see whether he can add to his other capacities that of patience, and whether he can discipline himself to make possible a common base for all the court liberals. For the time will come soon when the constitutional crisis will again be acute, and Black's dissenting doctrines will be put to the acid test—whether they can be translated into majority doctrines.

Barcelona Faces Front

BY LEIGH WHITE

Barcelona, February 7

ONLY the captious still regard the defense of Loyalist Spain as the expression of revolutionary ardor. It may have been so a year ago, when the Anarchists and Largo Caballero Socialists were far more prominent in Spanish politics than they are at present. Then there was plenty of revolution and not much real cooperation in winning the war. Today, however, the defense of Spain must be regarded as the refusal of a united people, bourgeois as well as proletarian, to accept an imported type of government that they do not want and will not have unless far more foreign assistance and military strategy are brought into action than General Franco has thus far been able to command. The Spanish war has become a war for national independence.

For a demonstration of the war's decreasingly revolutionary and increasingly nationalistic progress, one has only to look at Barcelona. In Barcelona the people have faced the more depressing aspects of war—economic maladjustment, hordes of refugees and consequent overcrowding, shortage of food and fuel during one of the coldest winters ever known, uninterrupted air bombardments, general disruption of social life—without any of the galvanizing factors of proximity to the front. In Barcelona the two mutually antagonistic, electric currents of the war are crossed—the military and the political. If there is a short circuit, it is in Barcelona that the sparks fly. And it is precisely in Barcelona, with its anarchism, its French Revolution libertarianism, and its Catalan cellularism, that the trend away from *proletarianismo* back to *republicanismo* has been most striking.

The other day I was walking in the lower *ramblas* and happened to pass what used to be the Cafe Lion d'Or. Until the "events of May" the Lion d'Or had been a stronghold of the ultra-leftist POUM. But after the uprising was put down and a part of the POUM sent to jail, the battle-scarred building was sealed by the police and more or less forgotten. The day I passed, however, an excited crowd was standing in front, and obviously something was about to happen. Another revolutionary disturbance? Nothing like it: the Lion d'Or had been quietly renovated and made into headquarters for the *Lotería Nacional*. What was about to happen was the first drawing ever to be held in Barcelona, replete with all the ritual that once marked the Madrid ceremony.

This incident is characteristic of the change that has come over Barcelona in its second year of war. A year ago the city was a teeming, phrenetic revolutionary base. The street cars, buses, trains, and subways all bore the red-and-black emblem of the Anarchists—except where the Socialist UGT was strong and there the emblems were combined. From noon to midnight the cafes that line the *ramblas* were thronged with blue-overalled workers, militiamen, and "guards of order," and similarly blue-overalled burghers anxious to look like proletarians. Everyone who could packed a gun. There were turbulent mass-meetings and frequent skirmishes, and at night there was firing in the streets. By day the people gathered in the gigantic Plaça de Catalunya or took long bus rides for pleasure. A sort of holiday *proletarianismo* was the fashion. The front, and the government in Valencia, seemed rather far away.

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But with the prolongation of the war all that has gradually disappeared. It was beginning to disappear, in fact, when I arrived in Spain the first of May. The May uprising sponsored by the POUM was a challenge to the government of the Popular Front. Basically the issue was microcosm versus macrocosm: complete the social revolution and possibly lose the war, or scrap the social revolution and probably win it. The Popular Front, dominated as it was by Left Republicans, Socialists, and Communists, took the macrocosmic view: scrap the revolution and win the war and let social change take care of itself when fascism no longer threatens.

The result in Catalunya was a reshuffling of the Generalitat to the advantage of the Esquerra Republicana, led by President Lluis Companys, and the PSUC (Unified Catalan Communist-Socialist Party), led by Economics Councilor Joan Comorera. The result in Spain as a whole was the dissolution of the Largo Caballero government and its replacement by the government of Juan Negrín, charged with subordinating everything to the winning of the war. The government's prestige, internationally as well as internally, has been gaining ever since.

After the test offensive at Brunete in July and the definitely successful offensive at Belchite in September, the Negrín government in November was strong enough to move to Barcelona and there proceed to coordinate the whole of Spain for the single purpose of winning the war. For the first time in history the political and economic hearts of Spain were one.

Since then there has been a gradual tightening of control in Barcelona along administrative, industrial, and police, as well as military, lines. Defense Minister Prieto and the army's general staff have been given *carta blanca*. The "fifth column" has been silenced if not removed; the war industries are working triple time; the problem of the food supply has been taken in hand; and air-raid precautions are being brought up to the efficiency of the anti-aircraft batteries that honeycomb the city. Existing bomb-proof and gas-proof shelters are rapidly being augmented. All street lights and all cafe and theater fronts have been painted blue, and the nights are blacker than anyone thought they could be.

The red-and-black flag is no longer the ubiquitous ensign that it once was; now the red, gold, and purple of the republic and the four red bars on gold of the Catalan Generalitat account for most of the city's color. The government of the republic is firmly in the saddle, and with it are the Generalitat and the government of Euzkadi (to care for its 150,000 refugee Basques). The militiamen went out a year ago, followed after the "events of May" by the POUM, or at least its Trotskyite wing, and the political supremacy of the Anarchists. What remains is roughly what existed before the war began—a Popular Front government resting on a broad trade-union base, with the difference that though the Anarchist CNT still dominates most of industry, the Communist-Socialist UGT has succeeded in aligning against it the petty bourgeoisie from traveling salesmen to hotel keepers.

The *ramblas* are as always jammed with crowds—organ grinders, flower women, and lottery vendors among them—but now they are bourgeois crowds and the identifiable proletarian is hard to single out. The workers' "guards of order" have disappeared, and the Guardia Nacional, assisted at night by the traditional *serenos* and *vigilantes,* now has charge of public order. The soldiers you encounter, and they do not overrun the city, are the uniformed men and officers of the republican army, not militiamen. If *comandantes* tend to eat and drink with privates still, they are soldiers, not revolutionaries, in speech and action as well as dress.

Even the forms of address are changing. *Salud* is still a fairly common form, but *Buenas* and *Passeu Bé* are much more common, and *Adios* is rapidly coming back. Though the street cars, buses, trains, and subways still bear the emblem of the CNT, their service has lost much of its *compañerismo;* conductors, like store clerks and officials, address you as *Señor* or *Señora. Compañero* itself has reverted to its traditional meaning ("fellow-mortal"), and *Camarada* has all but disappeared. Officers and public figures have become *Señores Dons* again.

Whereas a year ago propaganda was carried on mainly through mass-meetings, vivid revolutionary posters, exhortations in the press, and loud speakers in the streets, it has now taken a distinctly cultural turn, with an accent on war relief. Recently a recital at the rococo, Tiffany-ceilinged Orfeó Català featured the Czechoslovakian dancer, Mira Holzabajova. Its function was to raise money for the Children's Aid. The Mexican composer Silvestre Revueltas conducted the Catalan Symphony Orchestra in his popular "Redes" ("Nets"), in order to raise money for the victims of a particularly deadly air bombardment the preceding week. The Women's Committee Against War and Fascism and the Mexican League of Revolutionary Writers and Artists (LEAR) sponsored the concert.

The effect of the war has been de-politicalizing rather than demoralizing. You have only to compare the posters issued by all and sundry in the early days with the posters that appear today to realize that this is so. "Farmers! the land is yours," was the slogan of the POUM

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a year ago. "Farmers! the revolution needs your strength," was the slogan of the UGT. The slogan of the CNT, "United We Shall Conquer," was depicted in a poster showing a CNT tank leading a UGT tank on to victory. Now, however, the government itself issues most of the posters. Typical of these is the broadside: "Talent, not money, opens the door to knowledge. Culture has ceased to be the privilege of a minority. The Ministry of Public Instruction has created thousands of scholarships to pay for the education of every son of the people who can demonstrate his talent." Other government posters announce that the number of beds for the tubercular has increased 168 per cent in spite of the war, and that illiterate soldiers are being taught to read and write while in the trenches. The latest PSUC posters are not even illustrated, but are simply such red-lettered quotations from José Diaz, secretary of the Communist Party of Spain, as: "To drive out the foreigner requires the cooperation of every Spaniard who desires the independence of his country." A recent Anarchist poster quoting Elisée Reclus to the effect that "anarchy is the highest expression of order" is very clearly on the defensive.

But slogans and posters, like other forms of political propaganda, are playing less and less important parts in the lives of the Barcelonese. The loud speakers remaining in the streets are not used for political broadcasts at all. They belong to radio stores, or to the Red Cross, or to the Generalitat's Radio Association, and concentrate on music. The Propaganda Secretariat's frequent daily broadcasts are hardly more than news reports, and aside from endless repetitions of the republican "Himno de Riego" and the Catalan "Els Segadors," the Generalitat's radio is no more propagandist in character than the daily papers, which are not excessively so.

For those who would take their social revolutions straight or not at all (the result is frequently the same), some of the changes that I have indicated in this article may be depressing. But they were inevitable. Under fascism the social revolution would not be able to exist at all, and until fascism is killed in Spain the social revolution cannot progress. That seems to be axiomatic. It is true that the land-redistribution question has hardly been touched upon; that foreign and domestic industrial and commercial property rights are still in a tangle; that there is the ridiculous situation of collectivized enterprises competing with one another; that there is inflation and speculation; and that wage readjustments have not kept step with the war-time rise in prices. But nevertheless, the war is being won.

Wall Street Is a Race-Track

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

WITH budget-balancing abandoned, a new appropriation asked for the WPA, and various other measures in force to maintain purchasing power, it is unlikely that the present depression will, at worst, resemble that of 1932. But the fact that there is a bottom to the morass, and that we are not in danger of sinking deeper than our necks, is hardly consolation for failure to reach dry land and begin the ascent of those shining slopes leading to a national income of 80 to 100 billion dollars which, we have been told, is the Administration's objective.

It is obvious that an increase of some 30 per cent in national income means a similar increase in national production, which is conditional on an increase in investment. There is, I am aware, a school of thought which denies this necessity, which argues that there has been too much investment anyway and what is needed is more and more consumption. Two replies may be made. No practical way has been found of forcing the immediate consumption of all incomes; yet if there are "savings," these must be translated into real capital investments—houses, factories, machinery—or the total product will not be used up, and unemployment will follow. Again, if a higher national income is to mean a higher standard of living, production facilities in some lines must be increased or the advance will be dissipated in increased prices. We may have enough automobile factories to supply our wants at an advanced income level. We certainly have not enough houses; and there are indications that a normal demand for many other goods and services could only be met by bringing into use obsolete plant, making a rise in prices inevitable.

This situation should not, of course, blind us to the fact that in this, as in other advanced capitalist countries, there is a secular trend toward over-saving, toward a surplus over and above current consumption too great for translation into profitable investment. In any long-term program of national investment this factor must be taken into account, but it is not a matter of concern in the immediate future.

I should expect business apologists to take issue with this statement and insist that there is no field for profitable investment so long as New Deal policies continue. The reply to this is: either investors have an incredible incapacity for taking long-term views or they have come to agree with the Communists that the economic system is collapsing. But if the latter be true, their eager purchase of public bonds doesn't make sense. Personally I regard the first explanation as the correct one, particularly since the whole system of investment as developed in the corporate era has been to encourage short-term views. Any defense of the Stock Exchange lays stress on the fact

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that it offers the investor maximum liquidity. This is a great convenience for the investor and, it is claimed, has been an immense aid in promoting a flow of funds into the capital market. Even so, liquidity is far from an unalloyed blessing from the point of view of the general economy. The theoretical ability of the investor to reverse a judgment at short notice has been a primary factor in encouraging the pursuit of capital appreciation rather than income, a pursuit which more than anything else has made Wall Street a race-track rather than an investment market.

According to market theory, the expert opinions of traders, as expressed in purchases and sales, automatically produce an appraisal of a stock which is close to its exact investment value. Such an appraisal, it would seem, ought to have some relation to the income which the stock produces or is expected to produce. After all, a stock is simply a claim to a share in the profits of an enterprise; unless it yields, or promises to yield an income, it is nothing. Actually, of course, traders do not spend laborious days figuring the present value of an indefinite series of indeterminate payments. They are concerned with the price of a stock next week or next month, and the most successful are those who can best anticipate news likely to affect the market (or secure a pre-release) and estimate the psychological reaction to it. "Professional investment," to quote J. M. Keynes's inimitable metaphor, "may be likened to those newspaper competitions in which competitors have to pick out the six prettiest faces from a hundred photographs, the prize being awarded to the competitor whose choice most nearly corresponds to the average preferences of the competitors as a whole. . . . It is not a case of choosing those which, to the best of one's judgment, are really the prettiest, nor even those which average opinion genuinely thinks the prettiest. We have reached the third degree where we devote our intelligences to anticipating what average opinion expects the average opinion to be."

The evil effects of a market in which the speculative tail wags the investment dog is most apparent in its relation to new issues. From the point of view of the national economy, the main function of the Stock Exchange is to provide a conduit through which the stream of savings may flow smoothly on their way to being transformed into capital goods. A steady continuous flow is the prime consideration. But what do we find? In booms the sluices are opened wide and every method used to accelerate the current, with the result that the total supply is swollen at the expense of current consumption, while an undue proportion drains into New York. Frequently it becomes impossible to organize new capital projects rapidly enough to absorb the flow. That is the moment when the boom becomes dangerous and speculators really flourish, the moment for unloading dud stocks, the moment for selling water at fancy prices.

Comes the slump! The sluices are closed tight. The total flow of savings gradually diminishes, but with no outlet the reservoir fills—a reservoir representing the unspent portion of the national product. Inevitably output must be cut down; unemployment rises. Meanwhile where are our brave speculators? Are they scanning the future, playing the long shot, acquiring new assets at a discount? Maybe some are, but in the present slump, at least, these seem to be mostly the little fellows, the buyers of odd lots. It is to be hoped that they are buying for cash and will not be shaken out, for in that case they will probably have the laugh on the big boys, who are sitting on their liquid resources waiting Micawber-like for something to turn up and demning the unpleasant government.

It may, of course, be argued that the Stock Exchange does not originate slumps; it merely registers them. This is a dangerous half-truth. The Stock Exchange is more than a barometer; it is a piece of machinery occupying a strategic position in the national assembly line and, with its alternations between violent acceleration and complete stalling, apt to dislocate the whole process.

The trouble with the New Deal attempts to reform the Stock Exchange is not that they have violated its theories but that they have upset its practices. They have proceeded on the idea of eliminating abuses which had grown up in the market and were impeding its functioning. They have not recognized the extent to which the Exchange had become dependent on its parasites; so that, deprived of them, it found it difficult to function at all. The Securities Exchange Act, the restrictions on margin trading, the increase in the capital-gains tax, the tightening of Stock Exchange rules, the increased cost of trading due to taxes and higher commissions—all these things have served to reduce manipulation and put a damper on speculation. As a result operators have lost their old zest for jolly guessing games; or, as they would put it, confidence has been undermined.

On the assumption, obviously basic to the New Deal, that the capitalist system is to be controlled and reformed but not abolished, there is still a place for the Stock Exchange, and it would be a mistake to let it become atrophied. A national investment program should therefore include an effort to revive the Exchange, not as a casino, but as a real investment market. The reforms themselves should have an important influence in this direction, but a time-lag must be taken into account. It must be remembered that lack of confidence is not due only to the actions of the Administration. There are many solid citizens who have always eschewed Wall Street, believing that the dice were loaded. Still more have memories of the wild racketeering of the boom era. The Exchange has a big job still ahead convincing the nation that its new-found respectability is permanent.

An even more important cause of the loss of capitalist confidence than the Stock Exchange reforms is the government's taxation program. This, it must be frankly admitted, is not in any way a stimulus to investment. It is, in fact, designed in part to check the growth of savings —in the long view an entirely laudable objective. Actually even more drastic taxation may eventually become necessary to achieve this end. Gerald Colm and Fritz Lehmann, in a newly published monograph, "Economic Consequences of Recent American Tax Policy," estimate

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that in a year of favorable business conditions the 1936 taxation schedule would reduce net savings only by 4 to 7 per cent. They point out, however, that the saving capacity of different classes is very unequally affected. The group with incomes of under $15,000 suffer a curtailment of from 4.7 to 8.3 per cent; those with $15,000 to $200,000, one of 20.5 to 26.5 per cent; those with $200,000 and upward, one of 80.5 per cent.

In the past the general rule was the higher the income the greater the proportion of capital invested in common stocks. Inevitably so, since in an expanding economy a fortune invested in a diversified list of equities tended to grow automatically. As things are now, however, the ability of the very rich to buy equities has been severely restricted. Consequently the supply of capital for the riskier forms of enterprise has been much more reduced than the total supply. Moreover, since the stock market sets the tone for almost all other forms of investment, the collapse in equities has checked the creation of capital assets in innumerable enterprises quite unconnected with Wall Street. These results have been aggravated by the tax-free-bond loophole. There is reason to believe that the very rich are not only employing this for their new savings but are liquidating stocks on a large scale and putting the proceeds into municipal and state issues. Despite the low yields offered—2 to 3 per cent—there is a definite advantage, since it has been estimated that 20 million dollars placed in a 5 per cent industrial security would, after allowing for taxes, give a return of only 1.17 per cent.

In the long run, buying pressure on tax-free securities is likely to force yields still lower, encouraging holders in the lower tax brackets to seek bigger returns in corporate stocks. But the short-run need for greatly increased investment raises the question—assuming that a speedy constitutional amendment to abolish the tax-free privilege is politically impossible—whether important concessions to the wealthier taxpayers are worth while as a temporary expedient. There is no guaranty, however, that such a step would produce more than a temporary boom. The confidence of big business has been undermined not so much by specific New Deal measures as by the whole change in the political climate, exemplified, for instance, by Governor Aiken's speech on Lincoln's Birthday. Until its nostalgia for 1929 is overcome and a realistic appraisal of the situation becomes possible, business will not recover sufficient élan to enable it to take the lead in a drive for prosperity.

Hesitancies of the Administration regarding its next step, its alternate hot and cold breaths, offer business an inducement to stay on the sidelines and see what pressure will produce. If concessions are to be made they should be made quickly; further, they should be clearly stated to represent an absolute maximum.

In a comprehensive federal program a necessary first step would appear to be coordination of effort by the various departments and bureaus concerned directly or indirectly with investment. We have the Treasury and the Federal Reserve Board in general control of the credit situation; the RFC making loans to private industry; three or four different bodies concerned with financing housing, urban and rural; the PWA promoting utility projects; the WPA, in conjunction with state and city authorities, adding to the capital equipment of the country in a host of ways. These are only a few of the agencies partly or wholly dealing with investments. There would seem to be need for a National Investment Council which would harmonize these different activities, check competition for appropriations, prevent overlapping, and insure that, when possible, one effort assisted another. For instance, there are indications that the various housing programs may be hindered by a lack of production facilities for some materials. The RFC, which has already announced its willingness to make loans to the smaller business units, might therefore be asked to survey the building-material situation and, if necessary, give special consideration to manufacturers in this line.

While existing government investment projects are in some cases capable of useful extension, it seems certain that some additional and much larger scheme is needed if the depression is to be overcome rapidly. The most obvious deficiency in our capital equipment today is in working-class housing. The FHA, now its powers are extended, may meet the needs of the middle class and a small fraction of the working class. The USHA is tackling the slums but not on a scale commensurate with the problem. Between the spheres of these two agencies is a vast gap corresponding to the demand for decent homes at moderate rents. If this gap is to be filled, the combined efforts of the municipalities and the federal government will be required. There is a great opportunity here to take advantage of the cheapness of money and to turn to account the appetite of tax-avoiders for municipal bonds. Moreover, so many industries contribute toward building that beneficial reactions would be spread over the widest possible area. Another possibility is the plan for a series of transcontinental highways put forward recently in the Senate. It is doubtful, however, whether the need for greater transport facilities is as urgent as the need for houses. It would be for a National Investment Council to pass on their respective merits and on those of similar proposals, and make recommendations to the Executive.

Useful as it could be in the present crisis, such a council could have an even greater value as a permanent part of the governmental machinery. Making a continuous study of trends in the capital market, it could advise on the dovetailing of public and private ventures. It could note when the rate of investment exceeded the volume of savings and suggest such remedies as the postponement of public works. Or if the flow of savings seemed unduly rapid, it could investigate the efficiency of increased taxation. Such a council would not supersede the existing investment machinery; would not mean a government body passing on individual private investment plans; would not necessitate the granting of any additional powers to the Executive. It would mean that the existing power and resources of the federal government could be employed with far greater efficiency than at the present time.

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

HITLER has added another crime to his already long list. He has dealt a deadly blow to my friends who believe in "collective security," who have been preparing to put us into war in behalf of the embattled democracies in Europe. Without firing a shot he has compelled England to eat humble pie again and move humbly for an alliance with Italy. Neville Chamberlain, who sees no alternative to war except surrender to the dictators at every point, will, I have no doubt, follow up his impending settlement with Italy with a compromise with Hitler—that is what the die-hards, the Halifax-Astor group, and the inner circle of the City of London desire, to say nothing of the London *Times*. Their game right along has been to make some settlement in Spain by which they will get a considerable portion of Spanish mines and trade, just as they were willing to have Baldwin compromise with Italy for half of the Ethiopian swag. As Anthony Eden carried nobody with him out of the Conservative ranks, I now look for the signing of the four-power pact proposed by Hitler and a move for the limitation of armaments as suggested by him in 1936; then everything will be peaceful and happy with Hitler dominating Europe, and England safely ensconced in the position of a second-rate, if not a third-rate, power.

Now that raises some interesting ethical questions. As we all know, the government in Washington considers that Germany, Italy, and Japan are "bandit nations." Officials very high indeed use these words in describing them, and a group of men in and out of the government who are determined to have us war-minded within the next three months are constantly referring to the necessity of our smashing Japan now when it has its hands full with China because, as they say, we have got to take on Hitler and Mussolini eventually. But if Neville Chamberlain strikes hands with Hitler, what happens? Will this (a) make Hitler no longer a bandit in the eyes of Washington and our Anglophile statesmen, or (b) make Chamberlain a bandit and the head of a bandit country, or (c) still make it necessary for us to go to war to save the British democracy? In my eagerness to find the answer to these important questions I have carefully read the dispatches that have appeared in our leading newspapers from their special correspondents in Washington. I find a distinct variance quite in accord with the tendencies of their editorial pages. Thus the *Herald Tribune* affirmed that the Hitler speech and the Eden resignation had greatly strengthened the isolationist sentiment and that the bulk of the people in Congress are determined to tell England and the rest of Europe to go to hell—while we arm at once.

The *Times*, on the other hand, reported that the events had undoubtedly strengthened the government's policy—by which it means the government's policy of playing its game in Asia with the connivance and cooperation of Great Britain while getting ready to come to the aid of the democracies in due course, whenever the time comes to save the world for democracy once more. Other special correspondents reported Secretary Hull as being dreadfully upset by the news of Eden's resignation, which would seem to indicate that, after all, the recent happenings have not played into the hands of the State Department's inner ring. I am not surprised at that. How in thunder *can* we fight for the democracies if they insist upon playing the game with the dictators?

All of this brings into clear relief the fundamental weakness of the whole Hull-Davis-Roosevelt policy of getting ready to steal up behind the bandit nations and hit them over the head when they aren't looking. That weakness was and is that they have been in such a dreadful hurry to swat those whom they call the bandits. They weren't ready to wait a few months or years to see whether Hitler would hang himself or not, and how the British would jump; they had to settle it all in a rush. The American people were to be made war-minded in ninety days, with the aid of Japan and some nice rousing fireside talks from the White House. But Japan hasn't been obliging of late—though of course it may come across any day—and here is Chamberlain who has just walked out on the collective-security crowd. So after only a month or six weeks of the Great Conspiracy we have visions rising before us of Brother Neville and Brother Adolf sitting side by side with their arms tightly around one another. How in the world will the State Department be able to sell an Anglo-American alliance to our people in the face of a picture like that?

Well, the truth is it won't be able to. Instead of dissent being suppressed and the country following the example of the ineffable Alf Landon and the noble, patriotic Frank Knox, and declaring that all criticism must now cease at the brink of war, the fire of criticism has grown sharper as the targets have come more plainly into view; and the end is not yet, even though the rearmament bill is going through with a rush. I wish these warlike gentlemen had been with me in Minneapolis recently and attended a dinner of six thousand persons in honor of Governor Benson of Minnesota. When Governor Phil La Follette of Wisconsin in the course of a fiery speech said that the American people weren't ready to exchange social safety for war, every man and woman in that great audience cheered. The people in those two states are 99 per cent for letting the war business alone.

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Columnists on Parade

II. WESTBROOK PEGLER

BY MARGARET MARSHALL

WESTBROOK PEGLER is the typical newspaper reporter raised to a commentator. There has been no metamorphosis. He is still the newspaper reporter, common garden variety, and that is his principal distinction among the columnists. Pegler is a reporter by training, association, and attitude. His father is a veteran in the game, he grew up in the world of newspapers, and he married a newspaper woman whom he met when they were both covering the same murder. He began as an office boy in the United Press in Chicago. He became a reporter very early and at twenty-two was sent to the London staff. That was during the war. He offended at least one general and an admiral by asking embarrassing questions, and his foreign career was brief. After that he made a reputation as a sports columnist for the Chicago *Tribune*. He began writing his present column in 1933. Many papers subscribed under the impression that they were getting a sports column, and there were cancelations. Then editors "got educated"; he appears in 110 newspapers, circulation 5,907,389.

Your typical American newspaper reporter has no coordinated point of view. He is likely to be a personal rebel, at heart romantic, something of a reformer, but hard-boiled before the world. He usually has literary ambitions. The reporter's business is to ask questions and get answers even if the questionee is God himself. Do you remember when the reporters asked Dean Inge in New York harbor whether or not he believed in the Virgin Birth? That's the spirit. The tabloid era introduced a new competitive high in questions and a new low in their content. "I know the reporter's side," wrote Pegler defiantly in 1933. "I stop short of burglary, but the sort of newspaper schooling I received did not teach me to throw down an assignment at any time I happened to find the job repugnant to my finer feelings . . . and if I had been the vulgar rascal who was ordered on an office tip a few years ago to ask Colonel Lindbergh if it was true that he was engaged to Miss Anne Morrow I would have been the vulgar rascal to ask him just that." With the power of the press behind, and pushing him, it is easy for the reporter to assume, in a half-cocky, half-dedicated way, that he is asking questions not only for the press but for the American people, who have "the right to know" whether or not Dean Inge believes in the Virgin Birth. Meanwhile the world he lives in—which he comes to believe is the whole world—teaches him to have a low opinion of those who conduct the world's affairs in any and every sphere. He regards "intellectuals" as sissies, though he wants to write novels himself. The personal rebel, in and out of newspapers, nine times out of ten becomes a reactionary in politics because he comes to believe only what he sees and sees nothing in which he can believe—except personal relationships. Sometimes he becomes a cynic—though Pegler is no cynic.

Pegler's column is the column of a man who might have had such an internal history—and we know that he once tried fiction. He is agin everything, especially the government and authority in general. Nothing is what it seems, and both sides in any controversy are wrong. The title of his collection of columns published in 1936 was " 'T Aint Right." It began with a rather gentle piece about pigeons, which is said to be his favorite. His column is the liveliest of the lot. Being a good journalist he always attacks. Being unpredictable he constantly surprises. At his best he has a hard-hitting nervous style, which gives the impression of a boxer stripped and on his toes, welcoming trouble. He is the Cagney of the columnists. His style also gives the impression of ease in writing, though his friends testify that he works painfully at it. At his syndicate they say it's his "Gee whiz" attitude that has made him popular. But the "Gee whiz" attitude is running out. Pegler is becoming less unpredictable—everything is a racket—and the newspaper reporter is deteriorating. In disposing of the suppression of civil liberties of citizens as well as of C. I. O. unions by the blatant dictator of Jersey City he used an easy device, which an accurate reporter would scorn, of belaboring as Communist the C. I. O. and Morris Ernst (whose failure to get a Soviet visa is public knowledge) and ascribing to them the sins of Stalin. "Altogether the row is reminiscent of two dips who ran up to the policeman, one yelling, 'He glommed my stickpin!' and the other, 'He's got my watch!' " Another of Pegler's distinctions is his self-conscious use of sports or police-court jargon with which he brings every issue down to the level of a barroom argument between two "mugs."

He is vindictive about labor unions in general and labor leaders in particular. During the C. I. O. strikes last spring and summer he vented his spleen with characteristic violence. A column on May 12 was headlined: "Union Parasites a Menace. Labor Racketeering Vicious. Toilers Coerced by Leaders."

> As matters stand [he wrote on June 2], a contract with a labor union is worth no more than the word of the leaders who sign it, and . . . the labor leader . . . is immune to rebuke for anything short of personal murder, if that.
>
> One great income tax which is generally overlooked is that collected by labor unions from a class of citizens most of whom are considered to be too humble for the

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> official attention of the Bureau of Internal Revenue. . . . Only a labor leader would tax those whom the President has described as ill-clothed, ill-housed, and ill-fed [June 9].

> Senator Guffey blames the steel trouble on the refusal of three companies to sign contracts with the C. I. O. . . . The justification is that a contract with the C. I. O. isn't worth a damn. . . . In fact, no contract with any union is worth any more than a treaty with Mussolini nor will be until there is mutual responsibility.

Reprints of his column of June 9 were distributed to employees of the Krug Baking Company, whose resistance to an independent union is now the subject of hearings before the New York State Labor Relations Board.

Toward the end of June, Pegler reported an interview with John Lewis, who was annoyed by his columns. He printed Lewis's citation of the record of the United Mine Workers and other unions in the matter of contracts:

> . . . but it has since occurred to me that I was right in saying that a C. I. O. contract isn't worth a damn, or anyway not much of a damn. Because while the law now protects the union and gives the employer a firm pushing around if he utters just one peep against the union to the help, the law still does not penalize the union if it breaks an agreement. . . . [Lewis] is a very tough man, and I predict that there will be more blood shed for and against a free man's constitutional right to stay out of a union and retain his right to earn a living than over all the other issues put together.

That is one way of stating the class struggle; and Pegler leaves no doubt that he will be on the side of the right to work and the oppressed employer.

Pegler's apology for the horrible lynchings in San José in 1933 is famous. It was a protest against self-righteousness rather than a defense of lynching, but its violence was disproportionate to its object. That is characteristic. In his column a day or two before, he had made this interesting, only half-humorous remark.

> Not until the repeal of prohibition did I realize how I loved to hate that law . . . and the present moment finds me with almost a week's accumulation of . . . ill-will and no really worthy proposition or group to use it on. . . .

The San José column was offset later by his columns on the Nazis and Mussolini—and for once his personal inside anger matched the outside social issue over which it flowed, white hot. But there was no organic connection between the two. He is not anti-fascist because he understands fascism in any social sense. He is a personal rebel who hates any kind of authority that affects or might affect him personally. He still takes pot shots at the fascists—and he really hates them—but the fight between Hague and the C. I. O. seems to him "six of one and half a dozen of the other." The "right to work" as defined by the Citizens' National Committee has a warm champion in Pegler, though it represents the essence of fascism—which he sincerely hates as it shows itself in Hitler and Mussolini. It is only fair to cite his column (November 27) on the yellow-dog contract imposed by the Douglas Aircraft Company on its employees, but he did not fail to refer to the coercion of labor unions.

Pegler's attacks on the Bureau of Internal Revenue were based on a personal outrage. His argument is invariably *ad personam*. It dispenses with any obligation for knowing more than one fact at a time or weighing one against the other. And it makes fast reading. On January 26 he turned out a column—part fact and part fantasy and very amusing—about an orchestra in a night club. It showed up the "full-crew" rules of the musicians' union. It happens that the musicians' union represents A. F. of L. bureaucracy in its last stages, but the average reader would never get a hint from Pegler that it is not typical of all unions, and he has almost 6,000,000 readers.

Another of his pet hates is the Roosevelt family. On January 18 he twitted the Roosevelts for being born rich and defended the self-made men of America whom Roosevelt has called economic royalists. He had a point. He usually has a point and it is usually a pin-point. But in making it he drew a picture of the self-made millionaire that would bring a lump to the throat of the average man. Incidentally he spread out a large sample of the Pegler "philosophy" and his nostalgic Americanism.

> The element of rich men I have in mind are members of the Horatio Alger school who started from scratch as typical, one-gallus, Whitcomb Riley barefoot boys. . . . In every possible way they hustled to make an honest quarter or a dollar. . . . Horatio Alger was the most popular boys' author . . . it was always the story of the boy with the widowed mother or no parents at all who worked hard, suffered much . . . and in the last chapter wore a gold watch and chain. The hero was an insufferable prig [you don't catch Pegler falling for a sissy] . . . but his success was dream stuff and he was the inspiration of many men who are now either rich or quite well-to-do and who got that way playing the game according to the rules which were unanimously recognized [here Mr. Pegler takes a light leap over the exploits of the robber barons big and little] and against heavy odds.

His last paragraph is too eloquent—of many things—to leave unquoted:

> There are those who call Mr. Roosevelt a traitor to his class, but that cry comes from the hereditary rich. . . . The class I have in mind take pride in having made their own way. They are proud to have taken care of their own parents in their old age, and every crack from him about well-fed clubmen and economic royalists evokes from them the soul-satisfying and contemptuous taunt, "mama's boy."

Being a Common Man, Pegler is against big business in the abstract, though the self-made millionaire is one of his heroes. In the big quarrel between Ickes-Jackson and big business, which was the best thing the columnists had had to chew on since the Supreme Court fight, he attacked both sides in his best court-reporter style, in the name of the little man of 1929.

> Mr. Roosevelt's restatement of the New Deal was sweet and showed a wish to soothe the fears of the frightened sucker, and here is hoping he can do it, be-

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cause there must be an awful lot of small money under loose bricks in this country. But business had better make up its mind that taxes are going to get higher and bigger and quit sniffling about something that simply has got to be, and the Administration had better quit yelling "Keep your hand on your watch!" every time business starts to polish up that Arkansas diamond for a live one's cautious gaze.

How can any man take a chump with police whistles shrilling all the time?

Of late the quarrel about newspaper postal rates has occupied him. In the last few weeks three of his columns have been devoted to the claim of the Post Office Department that in the last ten years alone the newspaper and periodical press has enjoyed a camouflaged subsidy of more than a billion dollars. It gave him the opportunity to ring several doorbells. He could twit Jim Farley about special memorial issues—"the printing and engraving staffs began to think they were working for a funny paper." He could twit the Roosevelts on their journalistic prowess—"journalistic genius flashed in the writing Roosevelts the instant the returns were in in 1932." "Mr. Roosevelt and his Cabinet stooges," he continued, "want to publicize the fact that the press is a private business, conducted for profit." But don't think Pegler has any illusions about the press. He has often heard men in newspaper offices "sound off about the educational function of the papers and their status as a public institution, but always with a smile." He came out against subsidy of any kind.

It was in the course of these columns also that Pegler delivered himself of a piece of economic wisdom.

One curious thing occurs in this controversy which seems to upset the old Upton Sinclair superstition that a kept or subsidized press is servile to its sugar daddy. Because if the American press does enjoy a subsidy it has not only bitten the hand which feeds it but munched it off clear up to the shoulder.

So a great issue is disposed of. But Pegler was also enabled to twit Upton Sinclair. In 1934 Pegler was sent to California during Sinclair's campaign for governor. Sinclair pinned the brass check on Pegler, and we may be sure the accusation rankled. Pegler's columns bespeak a bitter, thin-skinned, romantic individualist—he lives in a "picture-book Bavarian-Alpine cottage in Connecticut"—who thinks with his feelings, who is anti-"intellectual," and intensely personal. His defense of self-made men is not impersonal either.

His coverage of the Sinclair-Merriam battle was characteristic. He set down Merriam for the political tool he was. He had a Roman holiday with "Mahatma" Sinclair.

Your correspondent has just reeled away from an interview with Upton Sinclair and some members of his Brainstorm Trust. The world is going round and round. There are wheels spinning in space, an old windmill, bolts and nuts . . . Nuts seems an appropriate note on which to conclude today's instalment.

That set the tone of future instalments. In this case it was an argument between a "mug" and a "nut." He preferred Merriam to Sinclair, echoing the exaggerated cries of the red-baiting reactionaries that Sinclair, the Socialist in Democratic clothing, would "smash the state completely."

Twenty out of thirty-five Pegler columns I have just examined deal with such questions as labor unions, Hague and the C. I. O., the Roosevelts, the newspaper-Post Office quarrel, the anti-lynching bill (he's against it). For the rest there are some amusing reminiscences and some good muckraking columns. One of his best was on the Catholic church and the child-labor amendment. As usual he seemed more interested in attacking the church—he was born a Catholic and the church represents authority—than in defending the amendment. His average man, George Spelvin, is an effective character, though conceived in sentimentality out of confusion. His most waggish performance was his column of January 3. It consisted of the following sentence repeated fifty times (in 109 newspapers*): "I must not mix champagne, whiskey, and gin." Recently he has spent a number of days in Chicago. That city's crooked politics give him unlimited scope for relieving himself of any stored-up ill-will. His columns on Chicago are usually good, though after several days the flow of bile over facts only slightly varied becomes monotonous.

There is no doubt that Pegler speaks to and for the small man, who is also agin the government and the politicians. Listen to some of his fans among readers of the Memphis *Press-Scimitar* who took part in a features' popularity contest. (Pegler tied with Eleanor Roosevelt for first place.)

While we have a free press and Pegler, our country is safe.

This is indeed true liberty when free-born men speak and therefore Inarticulate Mr. Average Citizen finds his Champion in the person of Westbrook Pegler. . . .

. . . Pegler writes in our favor. . . . Oh, no, you can't fool Pegler.

One lawyer fan called him the "Voltaire of our century."

In an article in the *Saturday Review of Literature* Bernard DeVoto echoed his humbler fellow-fans.

While someone of Mr. Pegler's ability is sitting on [the crackerbox], spitting on the stove, and telling us why he doesn't think so much of the folks in Washington—it is far too early to despair of our institutions.

To Mr. DeVoto Pegler is the direct descendant of the village thinker, the crackerbox commentator, of Major Jack Downing and Mark Twain. Mr. DeVoto flatters Mr. Pegler. The commercialized jargon of a sports writer turned columnist has little in common with the authentic homespun commentary of Major Downing. But admitting the lineage for the sake of the argument, Pegler, as a safeguard of American institutions—I am speaking of civil rights—is a slender reed. The commentator of 1938 who deals with the issues of the modern world in terms of personal feelings and intense individualism is the first to succumb to such reactionary delusions as "the right to work," which has been neatly turned into the wire-fence motto of the company town.

*Not 110 because the Philadelphia *Inquirer* refused to print it.

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Pegler's distemper, combined with a lack of any coordinated point of view, much less understanding, of the world he writes in must drive him farther and farther into reactionary attitudes. The charge often made, that he always agrees with the boss, is almost irrelevant. His experience with bosses has been pleasant. Success impresses him, and he believes in a deeply American way that the individual with guts and brains can achieve success. In millions the rich promise of America has generated a sense of power whose frustration they cannot understand. They tend to seek a scapegoat while secretly blaming their own inferiority. Pegler appeals strongly to this group. He has influence in so far as he expresses the small man's confused feelings about what this country's coming to—in glib and violent language his readers would themselves like to command. He speaks most eloquently to that element in the much-romanticized common man that is most susceptible to some reactionary American-dream fascism of which the stock in trade is scapegoats. Pegler's stock in trade is a kind of psychological inflation, the wilful assertion of self, which reaction always finds useful.

Meanwhile an interesting clue to Pegler's internal chemistry is contained in what is perhaps the most fulsome and therefore seemingly least typical column he has ever written. His column on "Snow White" was the outburst of a man who had had a catharsis. All his defenses were down. What came out was a stream almost maudlin in its sentimentality. It was really Pegler's disgust in reverse, and his key remark is as acrid a sentence as I have ever read.

" 'Snow White,' " he said, "is the happiest thing that has happened in this world since the Armistice."

Think it over.

Erratum: I was apparently misinformed as to the figures for David Lawrence's column though my source was presumably authoritative. His column appears in 133 newspapers, circulation 6,000,000.

[*Next week: Hugh Johnson*]

Verse for a Sower

BY LEGARDE S. DOUGHTY

This acre grew in simple green
Iambics slow as solstial sun,
Lyric-lucid and serene
As syllables of benison.

North-wind's anapestic rout
Brought this acre sorely down;
Scratched its candid wording out,
And left an acrid scrawl in brown.

Trochee-heeled, the ice-hard days
Trample on this acre now,
Leaving to the sower's gaze
Only lines drawn by the plow.

BOOKS

Whose Side Is the Lord On?

HEARKEN UNTO THE VOICE. By Franz Werfel. Translated by Moray Firth. The Viking Press. $3.

WHILE Austria trembles at the future, her gifted sons write of Magellan, Napoleon, and Jeremiah. Confronted by that savagery which her own prophet Freud revealed as sleeping within man and lives to see awaken, Austria seeks from the past a pattern for chaos. But while Zweig evokes the navigator's ghost only, it seems, in futile dream of brave new worlds, and the young Paul Frischauer takes a somewhat morbid delight in dissecting the Emperor's resonant lies, Franz Werfel now finds in the Bible a living belief in the uses of oppression and the power of the oppressed. "Greatness is consistent only with running counter to the world . . . the eternally defeated are the eternally victorious."

More than this, however, "Hearken unto the Voice" apparently indicates its author's return to race and religion, the culmination of a process that was foreshadowed by the return of the Armenian expatriate, Gabriel Bagradian, in "The Forty Days of Musa Dagh." And as a product of this process Werfel describes here the culture and life of ancient Judah under the relatively humane code of Moses—an ethics so advanced indeed that it was properly regarded with alarm both by Judah's powerful neighbors and by her own children. Primarily concerned as he is with God's use of man, Werfel does not neglect the uses to which man sometimes puts Him. There are really fine portraits of Zion's temporal rulers: Josiah, the "royal hurricane"; Jehoiakim, the dreaded tyrant whose strange passion for building vied with that for compounding—wines, perfumes, colors, incense, aromatics; Zedekiah, who at last freed Judah's bondmen because the Lord had decreed it and because he needed warriors. Interested always in spectacle, Werfel gives us glittering descriptions of the events, the customs and ceremonies, the many facets of the ancient cultures. He gives us Pharaoh, watching from his resplendent throne as the gods of Egypt tremble at Megiddo before the God of Israel; Nebuchadnezzar, not just but mighty, restoring through the sack of Jerusalem the "sacred symmetry" of the world; the farmers, soldiers, beggars, and priests of ancient Judah, whose social order, secure as it might seem and bulwarked by elaborate conventions, lay always ready for its Day of Judgment, the loan but not the legacy of an incalculable Creator. And against such a background Werfel traces the history of the impassioned Jeremiah, prophet of disaster, spirit of Hebraic righteousness, heir of Moses and precursor of Christ.

It is in the background scene of "Hearken unto the Voice"—this tremendous and rich mural of ancient life—that the virtue of the book lies. For Werfel, refusing to penetrate what he calls "the boring labyrinths of human psychology," makes no interpretation of that complex interweaving of psychic guilt and, as it were, ethical innocence which forms the emotional matrix of the martyr. To Werfel, Jeremiah, as he was to the Hebrews, is the voice of God, "the old causal God, the God of logic." And to Werfel, as to Jeremiah, ancient Judah sinned against this God, and ancient Judah was punished. Yet in spite of Werfel's convictions and creative force, can we now hearken to such a voice, coming as it does from the childhood of man? This view of Judah's

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fate seems at best a rationalization of despair and at worst masochistic. I must confess, moreover, that to me the ancient Hebrews hardly seemed to deserve all Jeremiah's fiery animadversions: their sin was as much their physical as their spiritual weakness. And since Werfel's modern protagonist is saved by embracing the ethics of Jeremiah, does Werfel imply that the Jews and all other oppressed minorities today are suffering because they, like their ancestors, have also sinned? Are the Nazis, even as the Babylonians, and Hitler, even as Pharaoh, simply the unwitting weapons of the Divine wrath? Although I realize, as Silone has lately reminded us in another book bearing on this theme, that in times of "conspiratorial and secret struggle the Lord is obliged to hide Himself and assume pseudonyms," I do not somehow feel that He, even for a moment, would assume the one of fascism. MAXWELL GEISMAR

The English

HELEN'S TOWER. By Harold Nicolson. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

EVERY new book coming from Harold Nicolson is, for those who have read his last five biographies, an increasing delight. "Helen's Tower" is a development of his historical attitude and an amplification of his biographical technique. One frequently wonders whether it is not more a collective snapshot of its author than a full-length portrait of Lord Dufferin, and this ambiguity is deliberate. For it seems to be the first in a series of studies which will revive, as only Nicolson can, his whole epoch in terms of the men he knew well. Dufferin was his uncle. This "tragic and decorative man" was governor-general of Canada. When he was made Marquess the Queen considered the title of Quebec, whose walls he had preserved, less suitable than Ava, the old Burmese capital, whose kingdom he had annexed to India. He was a great diplomat and an accomplished public servant. His acts still cast their shadow on British foreign policy, and Nicolson had no need to stretch or exaggerate the references in Dufferin's career to contemporary events.

And yet, as Nicolson says, his book is not primarily a record of Dufferin's career but rather a study in transitions and an analysis of a complex personality. It is also in an indirect and more subtle sense an apologia for its author as an individual Englishman and a brilliant defense of the English attitude as a world principle. Nicolson has a special talent for the evocation of a precise past that makes Proust's great work seem all the more what it is, a novel. Nicolson's style is Proustian, but he writes not novels but history. When he hunts his minutes of forty years ago, the breathless, choking lyricism, the haunting, agonized perception by way of the *madeleine* are absent. Facts in their unrelieved, patient, and almost deprecated nakedness, constructed from trivial relations, are assembled in an anecdotal and carefully informal pattern which to a casual reader might almost suggest that the writer was not quite bright and that every new incident burst with astonishment upon his unsuspecting simple sight. This style is scarcely mock modest or naively pretentious, for every sliver of memory or tactile description accentuates the underlying conviction that the past is forever present, that men's behavior, particularly the behavior of the English (for he indeed admits only the right by observation to speak of his own countrymen), is in its errors and accomplishments at once minuscule and miraculous. Nicolson's childlike familiarity with his Uncle Dufferin, instead of breeding a mythological character, constructs bit by bit an almost heroic but very genuine figure. His sympathy with liberal politics, while he sorrowfully accepts their cynical compromising, does not wholly stigmatize his subject with duplicity but merely is evidence of his own diplomatic experience. The patient cynicism of the English diplomat is not in the bland frame of either De la Rochefoucauld or Machiavelli. The realistic self-interest of the Latins, their steel eyes and shrewd greed, is absent from Anglican idealistic imperialists. Describing a portrait of Lord Dufferin as a young man, Nicolson writes, "His brush had been guided by such confused associations as chastity, the Oxford movement, and a very rich young peer." The sense of imperial crusade, the instinctive feeling that after all the colonies are better British than native-governed and every native will get to be grateful given enough time and colonization, the happy sportsmanship of enough naval bases, the grateful security of imperial pipe-lines are all ingrained in the fascinating chronicle of Lord Dufferin's deeds and days. It is too easy and too irrelevant to cry hypocrisy, to unmask the self-deception, to reveal the self-interest, to point out betrayals, and to list acts of disputable honesty. Nicolson is about as honest as any writer living, and an honest historian in his field is rarer than in the far simpler pastures of an artist's narcissism or a novelist's exhibitionism. Nicolson is a spokesman for England's attitude, and he accepts his stewardship without pretension. As a little boy he was pro-Dreyfus and pro-Boer, but he did not, after Mafeking, recollect that "on that occasion I manifested any overt pro-Boer sympathies. I shouted and halloed with the rest."

The question of the mind of Britain, that awesome and mercurial vexation, is very present with us today, whether reflected in its suppression of "Snow White" for minors, its provision of gas-masks for the masses, its ominous flirtations with Franco, or its dissembling with Hitler and Mussolini. Mere self-interest cannot simply explain it. A knowledge of its grain of modest but absolute self-rightness is helpful, and "Helen's Tower" aids toward this knowledge. "Even to this day (and God grant that it may last) there is something in the spirit of Westminster which discourages heroics. It has nothing to do with cynicism and still less with heartlessness, but it is based upon the sane realization that emotionalism should not pass beyond New Palace Yard." One can accept that on its face value. What it all has something to do with is just this: The English play the waiting game the longest, the best, and win most often. In this angry world they will be the last to relinquish their hereditary and imperial property rights. They have an experienced technique for elastic decisions which may end in eventual war and dismemberment, but not until every humanly conceivable policy or possibility has been consciously employed and exploited. Their modest and resilient stupidity, inexorable acquisitiveness, and stubborn ownership are their God-given armor. All we read in our daily papers increasingly makes clear how fierce a God they get their gifts from. The tragedy of Lord Dufferin's declining days, his involvement in just the sort of hideous and criminal scandal which would most hurt and destroy such a charming man, was not mitigated by his innocence or by his almost accidental connection with the fraud. Dufferin's tragedy is in miniature the present drama of the British Empire, and Nicolson records it with a grace equivalent to its greatness. The urbanity, the simplicity, the endearing record of the many dates, names, places, and his unutterably tender sympathy for it all must command our homage. The last page, for example, is a masterpiece of poetic documentation and touching truth.

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Once my sister remarked to Nicolson that she thought the empire started to decline when it lost us as a colony, the only colony it has ever lost. "Not at all," he replied seriously. "We deeded back the Ionian Islands."

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

The Realm of Truth

THE REALM OF TRUTH. Book III of "Realms of Being." By George Santayana. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.75.

THREE decades have passed since Santayana published his celebrated "Life of Reason." Though its magisterial pronouncements were made in accents reminiscent of Plato and Aristotle, that work beguiled contemporary naturalists to view Santayana as one of them. To these philosophers it now seems that Santayana's early naturalism has become progressively attenuated in his recent books. Especially in the "Realms of Being"—a series of books to which the present volume belongs—it appears that the spiritual life has displaced the life of reason, and dispersed its poignant relevance to the human scene.

The "Life of Reason," however, was not a system of philosophy but a philosophy of morals, that is, of the harmony possible in man's practical enterprise. Its naturalistic bias was never central to Santayana's perspective, and even in the "Life of Reason" was qualified by that nostalgia for the spiritual life which so manifestly motivates the "Realms of Being."

Readers of the preceding volumes of this series will recall Santayana's distinction between the realm of matter, which comprises all existence, and the realm of essences, which are the eternal objects of thought and intuition. The realm of truth defines the relation between these other two realms of being, as well as the relation between the moral affairs of the practical reason and the aesthetic devotions of the contemplative spirit.

Truth is a prosaic, practical affair, of interest only to those unfortunate spirits whose material circumstances are unstable and insecure. Though it naturally inclines to the contemplation of pure essence, the spirit must here—to preserve itself—take cognizance of existence. The form of this existence is the truth.

But truth is not the ultimate goal or good of mind. That ultimate good is the spiritual life, which consists in freedom from existence. Free spirits, like the heroes of Santayana's famous novel, live in a material world which sustains them but in which they play no part. They are not workaday forces shaping the world but festive intelligences illuminating it by the free play of wit and fancy. In such spiritual life "truth would take its place side by side with fiction of every sort, to be valued not because true—for merely being true does not make things worth knowing—but only for invigorating and entertaining the mind."

If such entertainment is the value of this philosophy—and for a "free spirit" it can have no other value—it has eminently fulfilled its functions. If, however, the reader is so far from enjoying such "freedom" of spirit as to have a vital and not merely aesthetic interest in truth, he will look to philosophy for something more than an invigorating exercise of his mind. He will look for principles relevant to existence and clarifying the methods by which he comes to know it. And in this demand for an operative efficacy of philosophy there lies a challenge to those abstract realms of being which Santayana has here so neatly articulated into a system. From such a vantage point these realms of being are revealed as the continuous phases of human experience which by a linguistic artifice Santayana has dissociated from the natural and social world in which they originate and function.

This dissociation is at the root of his theory of truth, which he defines as the "complete ideal description of existence." Truth is not the quality of an idea, opinion, or judgment. It is "the standard which these deliverances conform to, in so far as they are true." "That which is true is the proposition, relation, or other essence actually illustrated in the facts." The truth is absolute, and "forms an ideal realm of being impersonal and super-existential."

This doctrine—so momentous in its vision of eternity—is not merely irrelevant to actual procedures in science but seems to lack internal coherence as well.

According to Santayana, true knowledge is a description of existence which conforms to a standard description. Then knowledge in this theory—as in Platonic realism—is a kind of *recognition,* and the trueness of any description of existence lies in its *identity* with that "standard comprehensive description" which is the truth. But this recognition, or identity, presupposes the independent knowledge of the two descriptions identified; in other words, the independent knowledge of the description made by the judgment and of the standard description recognized in it. Now, such knowledge of the standard description would have to be attained either through a knowledge of existence, in which case it could not serve as a standard for such knowledge, or through an immediate apprehension of essences, in which case we could have complete knowledge of all truth about existence without any empirical inquiry. Both alternatives are absurd, yet no others seem possible in Santayana's theory.

But perhaps these defects of his system appear only when it is viewed in the human "foreground" for which Santayana has such sovereign disdain. Set at a proper remove in some distant cosmic vista, his philosophy may be free of the embarrassing constraints of an inconstant nature and a halting human society. It is not without truth that Santayana can say of himself: "In the past or in the future, my language and my borrowed knowledge would have been different, but under whatever sky I had been born, since it is the same sky, I should have had the same philosophy."

WILLIAM GRUEN

African Tales

AFRICAN GENESIS. By Leo Frobenius and Douglas C. Fox. Stackpole Sons. $3.

FROBENIUS is certainly one of the best connoisseurs of Africa, but as certainly he is one of the greatest romanticists, one of the most contested scientists in the field of anthropology. His sense for reality seems to have exhausted itself in politics. He was successively a good friend of Wilhelm II and of the left socialist minister president Kurt Eisner of Bavaria; he waited in the antechambers of the Social Democratic secretary of state Heinrich Schulz and has today a framed sentence out of Hitler's "Mein Kampf" in his studio. Anthropological science has its more or less justified doubts about the reliability of his writings. Any Africanist, therefore, will think twice before quoting him as a scientific source.

Frobenius's recent book is a selection of African tales chosen from his former German publications of the years 1921-31 and published under a pretentious and misleading

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title. The tales deal exclusively with the African high cultures of the Berber region, the Sudan, and southern Rhodesia. Since the African high cultures are extraordinarily complex formations which absorbed numerous influences from the Mohammedan, the European, and the Indian cultures, the title of the book seems especially audacious. The Berber tales, in particular, show a strong European-Christian influence, and some of them may provide tolerable reading for the hard-boiled anthropologist but scarcely for the general public. The inserted illustrations, originating in Frobenius's investigations of African rock paintings, have on the whole no relation to the content of the tales.

Douglas C. Fox, who wrote the introduction, begins with the sentence: "As pure stories, read for the entertainment they may bring, these tales need no introduction." I agree fully with him. Perhaps they may afford some entertainment.

JULIUS E. LIPS

After "Anthony Adverse"—What?

ACTION AT AQUILA. By Hervey Allen. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

MR. ALLEN'S second novel—his first, if you will remember, was a long story about a young man whose name began with A— is doubtless being awaited by hundreds of thousands of eager readers. To set their minds at rest, it should be said at once that the new novel is short, covers only four of these United States instead of most of the civilized world, and takes place over a period of less than a year if you leave out the epilogue, which doesn't amount to much anyway. The time is the fall and winter of 1864; the place, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland, and Virginia; the background, in case you have not yet guessed, is the Civil War. The hero is a colonel in the Union army.

Perhaps because he was dealing with a subject which recent fiction has made tolerably familiar, Mr. Allen was not able to resist a number of old favorites. There is the noble Southern lady who suffers with quiet dignity while the Yankees start to burn her house; there is the courteous Yankee officer who hates to burn the noble Southern lady's house but orders is orders; there is the fiery young Southern girl who sasses the Yankee officer. There is the battlefield scene after the engagement is over. It is night; a heavy snow is falling. You would of course expect to see a woman in a shawl with a lantern looking for her lover among the dead and wounded. Mr. Allen is more generous. He gives you two women in two shawls looking for two lovers. There is, however, only one lantern. At the end there is another scene which Mr. Galsworthy almost wore out. The old colonel, having watched the troops marching off to the war with Spain in 1898, and having mused on the meaning of it all and decided that every generation must have its battle, sits on his porch and thinks of the past. Suddenly a shaft of sunlight strikes through the leaves on to his face. He is dead!

It would be unfair to stop here. Mr. Allen brings his colonel on furlough from his home in Kennett Square down to the Valley of Virginia. As he passes through town after town, the war in some form is always present. In Philadelphia it is hot talk about killing every last rebel; in Harrisburg it is rumor, what you read in the newspapers, and an otherwise quiet life; in Chambersburg it is ashes and blackened chimneys, the aftermath of a rebel raid; in Morgan Springs, West Virginia, it is hog-wild militia lording it over the terrified inhabitants; in Winchester it is the headquarters of the Army of the Shenandoah and the war in fact and in person. It takes

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the colonel more than half of the novel to get to the small, unimportant engagement at Aquila which marks General Early's last stand, put down so handily by Sheridan but not before a sharp and bitter fight, to which Mr. Allen does full justice. The colonel's journey down to Virginia and the battle at Aquila are lively, full of credible incident, swift moving, shot with homely humor. This is Mr. Allen at his best, a best reminiscent of McKinlay Kantor's "Long Remember," though the material is less deeply realized. After the battle Mr. Allen and the colonel settle down to a blurry love affair which carries them through the winter and to the end of the war. If you are good at guessing you will know that the heroine is the noble Southern lady whose house the colonel burned down so reluctantly. North and South are thus reunited. But man must have his battle.

If Mr. Allen had not written a novel whose sales reached fabulous proportions, "Action at Aquila" might be taken for what it is, a good, run-of-the-mill Civil War novel, with a vivid battle scene and many admirable touches that can hardly be invention—the clock that never struck anything but two, the boy who was dared to stop a cannon ball with an iron spade and splintered his arm as a result, the strange end of Sergeant Smith who trusted his mulatto wench too far. If Mr. Allen invented these, the more credit to him. As it is, he has made them sound true. Much of the book sounds true. Much of it is hackneyed, a little weary, even a little labored. Perhaps "Action at Aquila" should have been written first, instead of the other way around.

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

Shorter Notices

INVITATION TO THE BALLET. By Ninette de Valois. Oxford University Press. $5.

It is very seldom that an artist and a craftsman is equipped with executive ability. Miss de Valois is not only a fine dancer and choreographer but the successful director of the Vic-Wells Company. She is also an accomplished writer. This book is a lucid and vivid account of her own experience as a dancer under Diaghilev, and then of her increasingly important role as a prime mover in the creation of a national British ballet. Her excellent taste prevents her from having any chauvinistic illusions about the preeminence of English talent; she is a realist, as any sensible idealist in the theater must be. Her book is full of fascinating details, with a wealth of reference to all the arts. The pictures are interesting and make one eager to see the English dancers. Anyone with curiosity about the developed classic dance or theatrical dancing today will be glad to have this splendid book.

BELLAMY SPEAKS AGAIN. The Peerage Press: Kansas City, Missouri. $1.

This two-hundred-fifty-page volume contains heretofore unpublished articles, addresses, and letters by the American prophet-economist Edward Bellamy, author of the well-known classics "Looking Backward" and "Equality." The first, published in 1887, sold in larger quantities than any other book up to that time except "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It has been translated into nearly every modern language and is considered, paradoxically enough, a textbook in modern Russia. What "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was to the abolitionists, Bellamy's books have been to idealists seeking a new democratic economy and social order. Most of the articles collected in "Bellamy Speaks Again" originally appeared during the nineties in such magazines as the *American Fabian Magazine*, the *North American Review*, and the *Forum*. In the light of recent developments—the enunciation of the philosophy of the New Deal and the presentation of various plans for keeping America out of war—this book, like all Bellamy's writings, takes on a new significance.

A GREAT LORD. By Paul Frischauer. Translated by Phyllis and Trevor Blewitt. Random House. $2.50.

Younger and less well-known to us than such compatriots as Stefan Zweig or Werfel, the Austrian Paul Frischauer gives promise of approaching their creative force. The protagonist of his story is Andreas Rasonski, an obscure Polish noble who, since he can afford the luxury of "neither convictions nor an establishment," dreams of becoming a great lord by the use of his own wits and his wife's charms. When this lifelong desire is fulfilled at last through Napoleon's affair with this wife Dzjunka, Rasonski, jealous, embittered, and trembling, discovers that "its fulfilment afforded him so little satisfaction that he no longer ventured to desire anything further." Mr. Frischauer's irony is not reserved solely for the career of his somewhat dubious hero. And his elegiac wit, summarizing his delicate psychological perceptions, gives the novel flavor as it plays upon the personages and events of the period—on Rasonski's lovely Dzjunka infatuated with royal tyranny, on the Polish nobility seeking a free land for themselves but not for their serfs, on Napoleon himself as he is revealed in Rasonski's aspirations and sickened fantasies, and on Napoleon's era, rich like our own in bloodshed, its crumbling fraternal Utopia enchanted by the fine phrases of its first emperor.

DRAMA

Drawing-Rooms and Battlefields

S. N. BEHRMAN'S new comedy at the Guild Theater certainly exhibits no new facets of the author's talent. The scene is again a sumptuous drawing-room through which his characters move with their accustomed ease, and the subject under discussion is not unrelated to subjects which similar characters have taken in hand on previous occasions. That is no doubt the reason why not all the reviewers seem to have found as much delight in the performance as I myself found, but I do not think I shall be inclined to enter any complaints so long as Mr. Behrman can discourse with the wit and incisiveness he again displays in "Wine of Choice."

His method, like every other method, has of course its limitations. Certain dramatic aspects of the conflict between the philosophy of those who have and the philosophy of those who have not obviously cannot be observed in a drawing-room. If the real significance of that conflict does not emerge except on the battlefield where concrete things are being fought for, then it is plain enough that only plays which move through the factory and the field can communicate that significance. But a fundamental assumption of intellectual comedy is that one kind of understanding of any conflict is possible only on the sidelines, or at some other place where, for the moment at least, the battle is not raging. And Mr. Behrman's drawing-rooms are merely realistic sub-

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stitutes for a spot of enchanted ground upon which deadly enemies can meet, fragments of neutral territory over which flies the flag of social convention guaranteeing against any breaches of the peace other than those which come within the definition of the "scene" as opposed to the brawl. Here the contented sybarite can exchange thrusts with the reformer, but here also the revolutionist can, not too improbably, come to express his exclusive contempt for all the rules of a game which is not to him worth playing.

Mr. Behrman's clarity and wit being what they are, the result is an exhilarating exploration of minds and temperaments which can be as clear and stimulating as it is only because he has adopted still another convention—that by virtue of which each character is permitted to speak as wittily as the author can make him. For this same reason the battle is, moreover, almost necessarily a draw. That does not mean that Mr. Behrman conceals the direction in which his own sympathies lie. He is, as clearly here as in the other plays, among those who hold that the sensibilities and loyalties of his liberals—"inhibited by scruple and emasculated by charm," as one character puts it—are indispensable to any possible good life, however insufficient they alone may be to guarantee it. But this revelation of his own conviction does not involve any failure to give the revolutionist an opportunity to make the best possible statement of his case, and there is no reason whatever why many spectators should not conclude that he actually has the best of the argument.

Perhaps the fact that the dramatic climax of the play turns upon an incident only collaterally connected with the main theme may be taken as an indication of a certain weakness in the method, since it might be argued that the best possible play on the subject would not reach even its purely theatrical climax in a scene where a group of people await the moment when a guilty pair must confess their guilt by emerging from the room in which only a few of the company know that they are hiding. But this scene is at least one of the best "screen scenes" of recent comedy. And if Mr. Woollcott, who shares with Leslie Banks and Claudia Morgan the chief roles, still "behaves" somewhat more than he acts, his behavior is very appropriate and he has increased considerably in skill since his last appearance on the stage.

"Casey Jones," the new Group Theater production at the Fulton, illustrates rather neatly the dramatic method which is the opposite of that adopted by Mr. Behrman. Writing about a locomotive engineer and the relation of his craft pride to the railroad system he serves, Robert Ardrey boldly moves his scene from railroad yard to way station and even to the locomotive cab itself. The result is, in one or two instances, a stunning bit of stagecraft, but the story, while quite intelligent and intelligible, is pretty consistently what one would expect. As a result one has got at the end some nice realistic pictures but far less real insight into the emotional or intellectual significance of a situation than Mr. Behrman manages to give us without a glimpse of the physical locale of the struggle with which he is concerned. Of course the comparison of the two plays does not prove that all plays ought to take place in drawing-rooms. Mr. Ardrey is only a promising young writer, and Mr. Behrman is a master of his particular craft. But it does prove that to take us to the scene of a struggle does not necessarily mean to make it extraordinarily real or vivid, and that to reconstruct the cab of a speeding locomotive may be to encourage a writer to believe that his play comes to grips with the subject rather more effectively than it does. Charles Bickford is convincing as the engineer.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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RECORDS

THE B. B. C. Symphony has not played long enough under Toscanini to be as sensitized to his direction as the New York or even the Vienna Philharmonic; but its excellent personnel and ten years' discipline make it a responsive instrument in hands that can use it; and so while the performance of Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony (Victor: five records, $10) is not all that Toscanini would have achieved with the New York Philharmonic, it is nevertheless a beautiful performance in the ways that his performances are beautiful — orchestral coloring, transparency of texture, contour of sound and phrase, structural coherence. And the recording allows these things to be heard.

No doubt you have read about the weakness in form of Chopin's Piano Concerto Opus 11 (Victor: four records, $8). The weakness exists; but I doubt that most of those who write about it could point it out—their knowledge being acquired from reading other writers who acquired theirs in the same way. And the ordinary listener is more likely to be disturbed by the usual remedy for the weakness—the cut in the long orchestral introduction of the first movement. That introduction once past, he will be aware, I think, not of weakness but of strength—the strength of the superb music Chopin has put into the work. I have remarked on previous occasions that the fault often is not in Chopin but in his performers: it is Arthur Rubinstein who tortures the phrases of the concerto's lovely second movement. In other parts of the work and in other ways his playing is magnificent; and Barbirolli provides an excellent accompaniment.

For a public performance of Bach's St. Matthew Passion that was going to be given permanence on records Koussevitzky should have engaged first-rate soloists; actually only Keith Falkner, who sings the music of Jesus in the performance recorded by Victor (Volume 1, ten records, $20), brings to the occasion the voice and style it calls for. To the deficiencies of the other singers Victor adds deficiencies in recording—among them shrillness and harshness in the sound of the orchestra. On the other hand the excellent singing of the chorales by the Harvard Glee Club and Radcliffe Choral Society sounds well. The work is sung in English; I think a recorded performance should be sung in the original German. And the *da capos* of the arias are reduced to the mere orchestral introductions—which I have heard done, for obvious reasons, in concert performances, but which I would have liked to see left undone in a recorded performance.

In quiet passages of Strauss's "Heimliche Aufforderung" the delicacy and subtlety of Melchior's phrasing—astonishing in a Wagnerian heroic tenor's singing of German *Lieder*—are well reproduced by the Victor record ($1.50); but the full voice in this song and in "Zueignung" and "Cäcilie" is earsplitting. Astonishing in a different way is Jussi Björling's singing of "O Paradiso" from "L'Africana" and "Cielo e mar" from "La Gioconda" ($1.50). Comparing this with the electrical re-recording of Caruso's "O Paradiso," I found Caruso's voice the more beautiful in timbre, Björling's the one with greater power and ease in high notes.

"Carnegie Drag" is an enjoyable jazz improvisation recorded for the Commodore Music Shop by a group of outstanding players that includes the pianist Jess Stacey, who for once is heard at suitable length.

Columbia records have not arrived.

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

America's Blood Guilt

Dear Sirs: It was the Christmas service in our little Chinese church. We were singing, "It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old." A sinister rumbling overhead dominated the music, then died away toward the south. It was a squadron of bombing planes going to bomb the cities and villages in the war area. And I felt a flood of shame to think the planes were all probably using California gasoline. These flights into the heart of China, these ruthless bombings of refugees and helpless civilians, these exterminations of terrified farmers have largely been made possible by the Niagaras of gasoline we have poured across the ocean.

The army is coming into a conquered city—an apparently endless line of Ford trucks, neat closed staff cars, and armored cars of Ford or Dodge make. We have supplied the power for this thrust into the vitals of China. We have given Japan its wings and wheels. No American who has not personally known the sick horror of invasion can possibly imagine what this great mechanized glacier of cars can mean to this tortured population. Words cannot reproduce the agony of fear that shakes a village when the Japanese soldiers surround it, shouting for the "big girls." Words cannot make real the nightmare of bandits descending upon a defenseless countryside. And we are helping to do this. We may send our pennies over for relief. But we can't escape the blood guilt of our share in this holocaust of suffering.

It is ridiculous to call the boycott a war measure. Is a housewife compelled to buy from every agent that comes to her door? Immortal souls are at perfect liberty to give or withhold their resources under the guidance of their own conscience. And may America highly resolve that she will cease to share in the profits of and the responsibility for this international crime—the assassination of China.

F. B.

Peiping, January 15

Mr. O'Connell's Peace Act

Dear Sirs: I wish to call attention to a bill now pending in Congress introduced in the House of Representatives by J. J. O'Connell of Montana and known as the Peace Act. The purpose of this bill is to amend the Neutrality Act, which is in fact anything but neutral.

The O'Connell bill would vest power in the President to declare when an act of aggression has been committed by one nation against another nation, and to name the aggressor nation by proclamation. Thereafter it would be unlawful to transport any arms, ammunition, or implements of war from any place in the United States to the aggressor or to any other state for transhipment to the aggressor. Also it would be unlawful to buy bonds or securities of the aggressor nation, to extend credit to it, or for any American vessel to carry to it arms, ammunition, or implements of war. Heavy penalities are provided for infractions of any of the provisions of the bill.

It is essential that this bill receive a public hearing in the House, where proponents or opponents may introduce testimony concerning it. I therefore urge all readers to communicate with Representative Sam D. McReynolds of the Foreign Affairs Committee urging him to approve a public hearing for the "Peace Act" of Mr. O'Connell.

EDWARD FRIENDLY

New York, February 23

Boycott All Aggressors!

Dear Sirs: In this most critical period in history it is time to stop telling people that boycotts encourage race hatred and that boycotts let helpless children starve. It is time that everyone knew that the money which the Japanese government receives from selling silk to America goes *not* to feed Japanese children but to fill Japanese cannon. Germany, Italy, and Japan should all be boycotted. A hue and cry should be raised against buying any commodities of these countries.

Many times it has been said that the democratic nations must unite against fascism. But do our governments move toward such unity? Unfortunately, so far, the governments of the democratic countries seem on the retreat. It is up to the people themselves to make themselves heard, and the most effective way they can do this is by boycotting all aggressor nations. In that way they can show the government their real position; both Spain and China will be helped; and fascism will be weakened.

M. V. LEOF

Philadelphia, February 23

Object Lesson in Technique

Dear Sirs: The heavy hand of big business may wear different gloves for different occasions, it seems, but underneath are the selfsame fingerprints.

The New Bedford *Standard-Times* (evening), the New Bedford *Mercury* (morning), and radio station WNBH, the only newspapers and the one radio station in a city of 110,000, are owned by E. Anthony and Sons, Inc. Publisher Basil Brewer, who controls this corporation, has been a valiant defender (?) of freedom of speech and press, as a member of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association. It will be recalled that the association and its members have often raised this banner of free speech and free press when attacking the New Deal and in their battle against the American Newspaper Guild.

Recently New Bedford's textile manufacturers and the New Bedford Textile Council reached an agreement, under pressure of the current "recession," for a 12½ per cent wage cut. Officials of the Federal Communications Commission later announced that Emil Rieve, acting chairman of the Textile Workers' Organizing Committee (C. I. O.), had complained that the Brewer-owned newspapers and radio station had "refused to print or broadcast a paid statement" of the union concerning the pay reduction. The federal officials said the complaint charging "unwarranted suppression of free speech" would be considered when the station filed for renewal of its license on May 1, 1938.

In one case big business has used freedom of speech and press as a slogan with which to attempt to crush labor. In the other it quietly renounced freedom of speech in an attempt to crush labor.

DREX SPRECHER

Cambridge, Mass., February 25

Republican Sabotage

Dear Sirs: At last the Republican minority in Congress are showing their true colors. At last they have come out in the open in their fight against the Administration instead of allowing a group of Democrats to form the opposition.

On the recent vote for cloture in the debate on the anti-lynching bill the Republicans held the balance of power between the revolting Southern Democrats

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and the New Dealers. These Republican Senators, though they all claim to favor the bill, voted for a continuance of the filibuster, which has so far made this Congress the most inactive in history.

Why did these men, all of whom favored the anti-lynching bill, refuse to limit debate on it and thereby bring the filibuster to an end? The answer is simple: they wanted to be able to say when the elections came around that the Democrats had become the "do-nothing" party, and to call attention to the bad record of this session.

Let us hope that the American people will remember how those Republican Senators voted on the motion for cloture, and give them their just rewards at the polls. F. S. CUTLER

Newport, R. I., February 25

Louisa Alcott

Dear Sirs: I am very sorry and indeed aghast that *The Nation* (in its issue of February 19) should publish a review of the life of Miss Alcott which not only accepts as accurate Miss Anthony's fantastic analysis but piles Pelion on Ossa. It is impossible for one who knew her as well as I did, who enjoyed her amusing tales of Fruitlands and Mr. Lane, played charades and Mrs. Jarley with her, saw her pleasure, yes pleasure, in giving her father comforts and happiness and in caring for little Lulu, to make such phrases as "sterile rewards," "borderland of hysteria," "thwarted life" fit at all the buoyant and free character who was often a guest in my home.

I cannot refrain from writing a few words of protest.

MARION TALBOT

Chicago, February 23

Still Afraid of Forgery?

Dear Sirs: The research supporting Beatrice Schapper's Afraid of Forgery? in *The Nation* of February 5 was evidently confined to obsolete check-protecting devices, for she will find that no forger, no matter how clever, can "sponge out the colors" from a check protected by an imprint made with a modern ribbon-inking protectograph. Checkwriters employing the old liquid-ink method and fixed "star" characters are not to be compared with machines employing a ribbon which bleeds an indelible ink into the very fiber of the paper.

Moreover, some checkwriter policies provide coverage against forgery of the drawer's signature and the indorsement, and contain a valuable affidavit clause providing that the insured need not furnish proof but merely an affidavit stating that loss has occurred.

There are other errors in Miss Schapper's article. The elementary principle of law "He who alleges must prove" is a refutation of the statement about bank responsibility. Due care only is required of the banks. IRVING L. GREENE

New York, February 15

Dear Sirs: For the sake of argument, suppose I concede that no forger can change the amount on a check protected by a modern checkwriter. What of it? A forger can still forge an indorsement on the back of the check, where most of the losses occur, or make alterations at a half-dozen or so other points not protected by the indelible provision, which covers only the amount. While the free insurance policies are limited, it is true that some forgery insurance policies broader than others may be purchased. Again what of it? The fact still remains that forgery protective devices are almost entirely unnecessary because the depositor is already adequately protected by the Uniform Negotiable Instruments Act.

As for your statement, "Due care only is required of the banks," it may be said that the quality of the care exercised is dependent upon the intensity of the bank's wish to avoid losses to itself through cashing forged checks, for the banks know that they are responsible. Section 23 of the Uniform Negotiable Instruments Act reads:

> Effect of forged or unauthorized signature —Where a signature is forged or made without the authority of the person whose signature it purports to be, it is wholly inoperative, and no right to retain the instrument, or to give a discharge therefor, or to enforce payment thereof against any party thereto, can be acquired through or under such signature, unless the party against whom it is sought to enforce such right is precluded from setting up the forgery. . . .

BEATRICE SCHAPPER

Pittsburgh, Pa., February 22

Union Teachers Only

Dear Sirs: In your issue of February 19, under the heading Plowing a New Field, you referred to the educational program of our union, the United Automobile Workers of America. We have a slight correction to make. At the present time we are not employing WPA teachers in our educational classes. The very realistic subjects that we are giving instruction in at present can be better handled, we believe, by our own union members who have graduated from our instructors' classes.

Classes for union men who will in turn become instructors are being held not only in Detroit but also in Cleveland, Pontiac, Lansing, Tarrytown, and Los Angeles. These instructors' classes are in addition to classes for the union membership which are being held in practically every automobile center in the country. MORRIS FIELD,
Education Director

Detroit, Mich., February 24

CONTRIBUTORS

PAUL Y. ANDERSON has become a member of the Washington bureau of the liberal St. Louis *Star-Times.*

LEIGH WHITE drove an ambulance in Spain for some months. He is now in Barcelona working on a translation of a book on the war.

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CORRECTION:—In the article Farm Aid: Fourth Stage by Mordecai Ezekiel in last week's issue, it was stated that minimum crop loans to farmers "under existing conditions would tend to put a floor under farm prices of approximately . . . 10 cents for cotton." This figure should have been 8 cents.

INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS

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